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# Ancient English Metrical Romances.

Selected and Published

By JOSEPH RITSON,

AND REVISED BY

EDMUND GOLDSMID, F.R.H.S.

VOL. II.

*“Quae priscis memorata Catonibus atque Cethegis  
Nunc situs informis premit ac deserta vetustas.”*

—HORATIUS.

60.2.1.08-



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(large paper) on demy 4to paper.*

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## LAUNFAL.

BY THOMAS CHESTRE.

THE only ancient copy of this excellent romance, known to be now extant, is contained in a manuscript of the Cotton-library, (Caligula A. II.) written, it would seem, in or about the reign of Henry VI. in which the translator is, by Tanner, who, most absurdly, styles him "*unus regis Arthuri equitum rotundæ tabulæ*," supposed to have lived. Two copies are preserved, in our own libraries, of the French original, by Marie de France, a Norman poetess of the thirteenth century; one in the Harleian MS. Num. 978, and the other in the Cotton, Vespasian B. XIV. The latter begins,

*"Laventure de un lay;"*

the former (being a collection of such pieces)

*"Laventure dun autre lai,"*

The English poem, which, by the way, is much enlarged, containing a surplus of near three hundred lines, appears to have been printed under the name of "Sir Lambwell;" being licensed, in the register of the Stationers-Company, to John Kynge,\* in 1558, and expressly mentioned in Laneham's "Letter, whearin part of the entertainment unto the queenz majesty at Killingworth castl, 1575, iz signified."

M. Le Grand has given the extract of a *Lai de Gruélan*, of which, he observes, the subject is precisely the same with that of *Lanval*; though the details are altogether different. See *Fabliaux, ou contes*, A, 92.

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\* He dwelt in Creed Lane, and kept a shop at the sign of the Swan in St. Paul's Churchyard. He probably died in 1561. — JOHNSON'S TYPOGRAPHIA, vol. i., p. 557.

## LAUNFAL.

### PART I.

BE doughty Artours dawes,\*  
That held Engeland yn good lawes,  
Ther fell a wondyr cas,  
Of a ley that was ysette,†  
That hyght Launval, and hatte yette ;‡  
Now herkeneth how hyt was.  
Doughty Artour som whyle  
Sojournede yn Kardeuyle,§  
Wyth joye and grect solas ;

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\* Dr Percy, by mistake, gives it (from Ames ?)

“*Le douzty Artours dawes ;*”

and says that it is in his folio MS. p. 60, beginning thus—

“Doughty in King Arthures dayes.”

† A lay (supposed to come from the barbarous Latin *leudus*, which occurs in the epistle of Fortunatus to Gregory of Tours—

“*Barbaros leudos harpa relidebat,*”)

was what is now called a song or ballad, but generally of the elegiac kind, tender and pathetic (in French *lai*, in German *lied*, in Saxon *leod*), which was usually sung to the harp ; and of which many instances may be found in the prose *Roman de Tristan*, 1488, and elsewhere. See more of these ancient British lays in a note to Emare.

‡ Thus Mary—

“*L'aventure dun autre lai  
Cum ele avient vus cunterai,  
Fait fu dun mut gentil vassal  
En Bretans lapelent Larval.*”

§ Thus in the MS. and Mr Ellis's edition ; but read, as afterward, Kardevyle. It is Carlisle in Cumberland, where King Arthur is fabled to have had a palace and occasional residence. “On this ryver,” says Froisart, mistaking the Tyne for the Esk, “standeth the towne and castell of Carlyel, the whiche some tyme was kyng Arthurs, and helde his courte there often-tymes.” (English translation, 1525, fo. vii, b.) Thus, also, in an ancient Scottish romance, furtively printed by Pinkerton :—

“In the tyme of Arthur an aunter bytydde,  
By the Turne-Wathelan, as the boke telles,  
When he to Carlele was comen and conquerour kydde,” &c.

Two old ballads, upon the subject of King Arthur, printed in the “Reliques of ancient

And knyghtes that wer profitable, 10  
 With Artour of the rounde table,  
 Never noon better ther nas.  
 Sere Persevall,\* and syr Gawayn,  
 Syr Gyheryes, and syr Agrafrayn,†  
 And Launcelot‡ Dulake,  
 Syr Kay, and syr Ewayn,  
 That well couthe fyghte yn plain,  
 Bateles for to take.

English Poetry." suppose his residence at *Carleile*; and one of them, in particular, says,

"At Tearne-Wadling, his castle stands."

"Tearne-Wadling," according to the ingenious editor (and which, as he observes, is evidently the Turne-Wathelan of the Scottish poem), "is the name of a small lake near Hesketh, in Cumberland, on the road from Penrith to Carlisle. There is a tradition," he adds, "that an old castle once stood near the lake, the remains of which were not long since visible;" Tearn, in the dialect of that country, signifying a small lake, and being still in use. The tradition is that either the castle or a great city, was swallowed up by the lake, and may be still seen, under favorable circumstances, at its bottom.

It is *Kardoel* in the original, and elsewhere *Cardueil*. The old romance of *Merlin* calls it "*la ville de Cardueil en Galles*."

\* Sir Perceval le Galois, or Percival de Gales, was one of the knights of the round table. His adventures form the subject of a French metrical romance, composed, in the twelfth century, by Chrestien de Troyes, or, according to others, by a certain Manecier, Mennesier, or Menessier, and of an English one, in the fifteenth, by Robert de Thornton. The former, extant in the national library of France, and in that of Berne, is said to contain no less than 60,000 verses; a number, however, which has been reduced by others to 20,000, and even to 8,700 and 4,500. It appeared in prose at Paris, 1530, 8vo. The latter is in the library of Lincoln Cathedral.

† Gaheris (*Gucheries*, or *Gueresch*), and Agravaine, surnamed *le orgueilleux*, were brothers to Sir Gawain, and both knights of the round table.

‡ This hero was the son of Ban, king of Benock, in the marches of Gaul and Little-Britain, and a knight-companion of the round table. He is equally remarkable for his gallantry and good fortune; being never overcome, in either joust or tournament, unless by enchantment or treachery; and being in high favour with the queen, whom he loved with singular fidelity to the last; doing for her many magnanimous deeds of arms, and actually saving her from the fire through his noble chivalry. This connection involved him in a long and cruel war with King Arthur; after whose death he became a hermit. His adventures, which take up a considerable portion of *Mort d'Arthur*, are the subject of a very old French romance, in three folio volumes, beside a number of MSS.

Kyng Ban-Booght, and kyng Bos,\*  
 Of ham ther was a greet los, 20  
 Men sawe tho no wher her make ;  
 Syr Galafre, † and syr Launfale,  
 Wherof a noble tale  
 Among us schall awake.  
 With Artour ther was a bachelor,  
 And hadde ybe well many a yer,  
 Launfal for soth he hyght,  
 He gaf gyftys largelyche,  
 Gold, and sylver, and clodes ryche,  
 To squyer and to knyght. 30  
 For hys largesse and hys bountè,  
 The kynges stuward made was he,  
 Ten yer, y you plyght ;  
 Of alle the knyghtes of the table rounde  
 So large ther was noon yfounde,  
 Be dayes ne be nyght,  
 So hyt be fyll, yn the tenthe yer,  
 Marlyn was Artours counsalere, ‡  
 He radde hym for to wende

\* *Ban* was king of *Benoic*, and *Boort* (not *Boozt*) king of *Gannes*. They were brothers, and both knights of the round table. *Ban* was the father of sir Lancelot. *Boort* in *Mort d'Arthur* is called *Bors*. There is no king *Bos*: nor, in fact, do any of these names occur in the French original. There was, indeed, another *Boort*, or *Bors*, afterwards king of *Benoic*; but the translator has evidently missupposed *Ban-Boozt* to be the name of one king, and *Bos* that of the other. A "*roman des rois* *Bans and Beors freres germains*." fo. is among the MSS. of the French national library. (*Bib. du roi*, 7184).

† No such name occurs among the knights of the round table, or is to be met with in any old romance. It is, probably, a corruption of *Galehaut*, *Galahalt*, or *Galahad*, of whom mention is made in *Mort d'Arthur*.

‡ Merlin, a powerful magician, was begotten by a devil, or incubus, upon a young damsel of great beauty, and daughter, as Geoffrey of Monmouth asserts, to the king of Demetia. He removed, by a wonderful machine of his own invention, the giants-dance, now Stone-henge, from Ireland, to Salisbury-plain, where part of it is still standing; and, in order to enable Uther Pendragon, king of Britain, to enjoy Igerna, the wife of Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, transformed him,\* by magical art, into the likeness of her husband; which amorous connection, (Igerna being rendered an honest woman by the murder of her spouse, and timely intermarriage with king Uther,) enlightened the world, like another Alcmena, with a second Hercules, *videlicet*, the illustrious Arthur. This famous prophet, being violently enamoured of a fairy damsel, in the march of Little-Britain, named *Airviene*, or *Traviene*, alias *The Lady or Damsel of the lake*, taught her so many of his magic secrets, that,

To king Ryon of Irlond ryght,\* 40  
 And sette him ther a lady bryght,  
     Gwennere hys doughtyr hende.  
 So he dede, and home her brought,  
 But syr Launfal lyked her noght,  
     Ne other knyghtes that wer hende ;  
 For the lady bar los of swych word,  
 That sche hadde lemannys unther her lord,  
     So fele ther nas noon ende.

They wer ywedded, as y you say,  
 Upon a Wytsonday, 50  
     Before princes of moch pryde,  
 No man ne may telle yn tale  
 What folk ther was at that bredale,  
     Of countreys fer and wyde.  
 No nother man was yn halle ysette,  
 But he wer prelat, other baronette, †  
     In herte ys nught to hyde,

once upon a time, she left him asleep in a cave within the perilous forest of *Darnantes*, on the borders of the sea of Cornwall, and the sea of *Soreloys*, where, if the credible inhabitants of those countries may be believed, he still remains in that condition ; the place of his repose being effectually sealed by force of grand conjurations, and having himself been never seen by any man, who could give intelligence of it ; even that courteous knight Sir Gawin, who, after his enchantment, had some conversation with him, not being permitted the gratification of a single look. (See *Lancelot du lac*, fo. 6.) Her enchantments, however, are related with some difference, and more particularity, in the romance of her venerable gallant, or, rather, unfortunate dupe, *tome 2*, fo. 127, whereby it appears that, after being enchanted by his mistress, as aforesaid he found himself, when he awoke, in the strongest tower in the world, to wit, in the forest of *Broceliande*, whence he was never able to depart, although she continued to visit him both by day and night at her pleasure. The divine Ariosto, by poetical licence, has placed the tomb of this magician in some part of France ; and our admirable Spenser, after an old tradition, in Wales, which, in fact, seems to have had the best title to him. His prophecies, which were first published in *The British History*, have since gone through repeated editions, in Latin, French, and English.

\* This king *Ryon*, or *Ryence*, was also king of North Wales, and of many isles. He sent to King Arthur, for his beard, to enable him, with those of eleven other kings, whom he had already discomfited, to purfle his mantle. See *Mort d'Arthur*, B. 1. C. 24. According, however, to Geoffrey of Moumouth, this insulting message proceeded from the giant *Ritho*, whom Arthur slew upon the mountain *Aravius*. Ryon was afterwards brought prisoner to Arthur (C. 34) ; and is named among the knights of the round-table. The author is singular in making Guenever his daughter.

† There was no *baronet*, properly so called, before the reign of James the first. The word, at the same time, is by no means singular in ancient historians ; but whether a diminutive of *baron*, or a corruption of *banneret*, is uncertain.

Yf they fatte noght alle ylyche,\*  
 Har servyse was good and ryche,  
 Certeyn yn ech a syde. 60

And whan the lordes hadde ete yn the halle,  
 And the clothes wer drawen alle,  
 As ye mowe her and lythe,  
 The botelers fentyn wyn,  
 To alle the lords that wer theryn,  
 With chere both glad and blythe.  
 The quene yaf gyftes for the nones,  
 Gold and selver, precyous stonys,  
 Her curtasye to kythe,  
 Everych knyght sche yaf broche, other ryng, 70  
 But syr Launfal sche yaf no thyng,  
 That grevede hym many a sythe.

And whan the bredale was at ende  
 Launfal tok his leve to wende  
 At Artour the kyng,  
 And seyde a lettere was to hym come,  
 That deth hadde hys fadyr ynome,  
 He most to his beryyng.  
 Tho seyde king Artour, that was hende,  
 Launfal, if thou wylt fro me wende, 80  
 Tak with the greet spendyng,  
 And my suster sones two,  
 Bothe they schull with the go,  
 At hom the for to bryng.

Launfal tok leve, withoute fable,  
 With knyghtes of the rounde table,  
 And wente forth yn his journè,  
 Tyl he come to Karlyoun,†  
 To the meyrys hous of the toune,  
 Hys servaunt that hadde ybe. 90

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\* The original reading is "ylyke."

† Caerleon (the *Urbs Legionum* of Geoffrey), formerly in Glamorganshire, but now in Monmouthshire, upon the river Usk, near the Severn-sea. The district, in which this city stood, was called *Gwent*, of which Arthur is said to have been king. See Carte. *Caerlegion*, or *Caer Lleon* (*Civitas Legionum*), is, likewise, the ancient name of Chester upon Dee. There is nothing of this in the original.

The meyr stod, as ye may here,  
 And saw hym come ride up anblere,  
 With two knyghtes and other maynè,  
 Agayns hym he hath wey ynome,  
 And seyde, Syr, thou art well come,  
 How faryth our kyng? tel me.

Launfal answerede and seyde than,  
 He faryth as well as any man,  
 And elles greet ruthe hyt wore ;  
 But, syr meyr, without lesyng, 100  
 I am thepartyth fram the kyng,  
 And that rewyth me sore :  
 Ne ther thar noman benethe ne above,  
 For the kyng Artours love,  
 Onowre me never more ;  
 But, syr meyr, y pray the pur amour,  
 May y take with the sojour ?  
 Som tyme we knewe us yore.

The meyr stod, and bethogte hym there,  
 What myght be hys answer, 110  
 And to hym than gan he sayn,  
 Syr, seven knyghtes han her har in ynome,  
 And ever y wayte whan they wyl come,  
 They arn of Lytyll-Bretayne.\*  
 Launfal turnede hymself and lowgh,  
 Therof he hadde scorn inowgh,  
 And seyde to his knyghtes tweyne,  
 Now may ye se swych ys service,  
 Unther a lord of lytyll pryse,  
 How he may therof be fayn. 120

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\* Little-Britain, or Britany, called, by the French, *Basse-Bretagne*, and, by the ancients, *Armorica*, on the coast of France, opposite to Great Britain, where certain refugee Britons are said to have fled, and established a settlement, on the success of the Saxons, in or about the year 513. See Vertot's *Critical history*, &c. I, 103. Bede, however, by some strange mistake, supposes the Southern Britons to have proceeded from *Armorica*. There was a succession of British kings in this little territory, who are famous in the old French annals. These British emigrants seem to have been chiefly Cornish, not only from their having given the name of *Cornuwall* to a part of their new acquisition, where they, likewise, had, as in their old possessions, a *Mount St. Michael*, but from the affinity of the two dialects, one of which is extant in its literary remains, and the other is still spoken.

Launfal awayward gan to ryde,  
 The meyr bad he schuld abyde,  
 And seyde yn thys manere,  
 Syr, yn a chamber by my orchard-syde,  
 Ther may ye dwell with joye and pryde,  
 Yf hyt your wyll were.  
 Launfal anoon ryghtes,  
 He and hys two knytes,  
 Sojournede ther yn fere,  
 So savagelych hys good he besette, 130  
 That he ward yn greet dette,  
 Ryght yn the ferst yere.

So hyt befell at Pentecost,  
 Swych tyme as the holy gost  
 Among mankend gan lyght,  
 That syr Hugh and syr Jon,  
 Tok her leve for to gon  
 At syr Launfal the knyght.  
 They seyde, Syr, our robes beth to-rent  
 And your tresour\* ys all yspent, 140  
 And we goth cwyll ydyght.  
 Thanne seyde syr Launfal to the knyghtes fre,  
 Tell yd no man of my povertè,  
 For the love of god almyght.

The knyghtes answerede and seyde tho,  
 That they nolde him wreye never mo,  
 All thys world to wynde.  
 With that word they† wente hym fro.  
 To Glastyngbery bothe two,  
 Ther kyng Artour was inne. 150  
 The kyng sawe the knyghtes hende,  
 And ayens ham he gan wende,  
 For they wer of his kenne; ‡  
 Noon other robes they ne hadde  
 Than they out with ham ladde,  
 And tho wete to-tore and thynne.

---

\* The original reads: "tofour."

† The original reads: "the."

‡ Kin(?)



Than seyde quene Gwenore, that was fel  
How faryth the proud knight Launfal ?

May he hys armes welde ?

Ye, madame, sayde the knytes than, 160

He faryth as well as any man,

And ellys god hyt schelde.

Moche worchyp and greet honour,

To Gonore the quene and King Artour,

Of syr Launfal they telde ;

And seyde, He lovede us so,

That he would us evermo,

At wyll have yhelde.

But upon a rayny day hyt befel,

An huntyngē wente syr Launfel, 170

To chasy yn holtes hore,

In our old robes we yede that day,

And thus we beth ywent away,

As we before hym wore.

Glad was Artour the kyng,

That Launfal was yn good lyking,

The quene hyt rew well sore ;

For sche wold, with all her myght,

That he hadde be, bothe day and nyght,

In paynys mor and more. 180

Upon a day of the trinitè,

A feste of greet solempnitè

In Carlyoun was holde,

Erles and barones of that countrè.

Ladyes and borjaes \* of that citè,

Thyder come bothe yongh and old.

But Launfal for hys povertè

Was not bode to that semblè,

Lyte men of hym tolde ;

The meyr to the feste was of sent, 190

The merys doughter to Launfal went,

And axede yf he wolde

In halle dyne with her that day.

Damesele, he sayde, nay,

To dyne have i no herte ;

\* Fr. Bourgeois.

Thre dayes ther ben agon  
 Mete ne drynke eet y noon,  
 And all was for povert.  
 To-day to cherche y wold have gon,  
 But me fawtede \* hosyn and schon, 200  
 Clenly brech and scherte ;  
 And for defawte of clodynge,  
 Ne myghte y yn with the peple thrynge,  
 No wonther dough me smerte

But othyng, damesele, y pray the,  
 Sadel and brydel lene thou me,  
 A whyle for to ryde,  
 That y myghte comfortede be.  
 By a launde unther thys cyte,  
 Al yn thys undern-tyde. 210  
 Launfal dyghte hys courser,  
 Without knave other squyer,  
 He rood with lytyll pryde ;  
 Hys hors slod, and fel yn the fen,  
 Wherfore hym scornede many men,  
 Abowte hym fer and wyde.

Poverly the knyght to hors gan sprynge,  
 For to dryve away lokyng,  
 He rood toward the west ;  
 The wether was hot the undern-tyde,  
 He lyghte adoun, and gan abyde, 220  
 Under a fayr forest :  
 And for hete to the wedere,  
 Hys mantell he feld togydere,  
 And sette hym down to reste ;  
 Thus sat the knyght yn symplyte,  
 In the schadowe unther a tre,  
 Ther that hym lykede best.

As he sat yn sorrow and sore,  
 He sawe come out of holtes hore 230  
 Gentyll maydenes two,  
 Har kertoles wer of Inde sandel,  
 Ilased smalle, jolyf and well,  
 Ther myght noon gayer go.

Har manteles wer of grene felwet,  
 Ybordured with gold, right well ysette  
 Ipelvred with grys and gro ;  
 Har heddys wer dyght well withalle,  
 Everych hadde oon a jolyf coronall,  
 Wyth syxty gemmys and mo. 240

Har faces wer whyt as snow on downe,  
 Har rode was red, her cyn wor browne,  
 I sawe never non swyche ;  
 That oon bar of gold a basyn,  
 That other a towayle whyt and fyn,  
 Of selk that was good and ryche.  
 Her kercheves wer well schyre,  
 Arayd wyth ryche gold wyre,  
 Launfal began to syche ;  
 They com to hym over the hoth, 250  
 He was curteys, aud ayens hem goth,  
 And greette hem myldelyche.

Damesels, he seyde, god yow se !  
 Syr knyght, they seyde, well the be !  
 Our lady, dame Tryamour,  
 Bad thou schuldest com speke with here,  
 Gyf hyt wer thy wyllle, sere,  
 Wythoute more sojour.  
 Launfal hem grauntede curteyslyche,  
 And wente wyth hem myldelyche, 260  
 They wheryn whyt as flour ;  
 And when they come in the forest an hygh,  
 A pavyloun yteld he sygh,  
 With merthe and mochell honour.

The pavyloun was wrouth for sothe, y wys,  
 All of werk of Sarsynys,  
 The pomelles of cristall ;  
 Upon the toppe an ern ther stod  
 Of bournede gold ryche and good,  
 Iflorysched with ryche amall. 270  
 Hys cyn wer carbonkeles bryght,  
 As the mone they schon\* a-nyght,  
 That spreteth out ovyr all ;

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\* The original reads : "theschon."

Alysaundre the conquerour,  
Ne kyng Artour, yn hys most honour,  
Ne hadde noon scwyeh juell.

He fond yn the pavyloun  
The kynges doughter of Olyroun,\*  
Dame Tryamour,† that hyghte,  
Her fadyr was kyng of fayrye, † 280  
Of occient fer and nyghe,  
A man of moche myghte.  
In the pavyloun he fond a bed of prys,  
Iheled with purpur bys,  
That semylé was of syghte,  
Therinne lay that lady gent,  
That after syr Launfal hedde ysent,  
That lefsome lemede bryght.

For hete her clothes down she dede,  
Almost to her gerdyl stede, 290  
Than lay sche uncovert;  
Sche was as whyt as lylce yn May,  
Or snow that sneweth yn wynterys day,  
He seygh never non so pert.  
The rede rose, whan she ys newe,  
Ayens her rode nes naught of hewe,  
I dar well say yn sert';  
Her here schon as gold wyre,  
May no man rede here atyre,  
Ne naught well thenke yn hert. 300

\* Oleron is an isle of France, on the coast of Aunis, and of Saintonge. It was known to the ancients under the name of *Uliarus*, as appears from Pliny. Sidonius Appollinaris calls it *Olario*. The maritime laws of France and England hence received the appellation they still retain of *La ley Olyron*; and here it was that King Richard the first stopped, in his return from the Holy Land, to correct them. In 1047 it belonged to Geoffroy de Martel, earl of Anjou, and Agnes his wife. See Martiniere, and Cokes, 4th institute, 144.

† This lady's name is not mentioned in the original. *Tryamour*, at the same time, is, elsewhere, that of a knight, and the subject of a metrical romance, certainly from the French.

‡ The following description of a female fay, or fairy, is given in the romance of *Lancelot du lac*, Paris, 1533, fo. C. 8.

"*La damoiselle qui Lancelot porta au lac estoit une fée, et en celluy temps estoient appellees faées toutes celles qui sentremettoient d'enchantemens et de charmes. . . et scavoient la force et la vertu des perelles, des pierres, et des herbes, parquoy elles estoient tenue en ieunesse et en*

Sche seyde, Launfal my lemman swete,  
 Al my joye for the y lete,  
     Swetyng paramour,  
 Ther nys no man yn Cristentè,  
 That y love so moche as the,  
     Kyng, neyther emperour.  
 Launfal beheld that swete wyghth,  
 All hys love yn her was lyghth,  
 And keste that swete flour ;  
     And sat adoun her besyde,  
 And seyde, Swetyng, what so betyde,  
     I am to thyn honour.

She seyde, Syr knyght, gentyl and hende,  
 I wot thy stat, ord, and ende,  
     Be naught aschamed of me ;  
 Yf thou wylt truly to me take,  
 And alle wemen for me forsake,  
     Ryche i wyll make the.  
 I wyll the yeve an alner,  
 Imad of sylk and of gold cler,  
     Wyth fayre ymages thre ;  
 As oft thou putttest the hond therinne,  
 A mark of gold thou schalt wyne,  
     In wat place that thou be.

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Also, sche seyde, syr Launfal,  
 I yeve the Blaunchard my stede lel,

---

*beaulté, et en grandes richesses comment elles devoient.*" These fairies, not unfrequent in the old romances, united the ideas of power and beauty ; and it is to such a character that Shakspeare alludes, where he makes Anthony to say of CLEOPATRA,

"To this GREAT FAIRY I'll commend thy acts."

Milton, too, appears to have had an accurate notion upon this subject :

"Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades,  
 And ladies of th' Hesperides, that seem'd,  
 Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabl'd since  
 Of fairy damsels met in forest wide  
 By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,  
 Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore."

It is perfect ignorance to confound the fairies of romance either with the pigmy race of that denomination, of whom the same great poet has given a beautiful and correct description, or with the fanciful creation of Spencer.

And Gyfre my owen knave ; \*  
 And of my armes oo pensel,  
 Wyth thre ermyns ypentel well, 330  
 Also thou schalt have.  
 In werre, ne yn turnement,  
 Ne schall the greve no knyghtes dent,  
 So well y schall the save.  
 Than answerede the gentyl knyght,  
 And seyde, Gramarcy, my swete wyght,  
 No bettere kepte y have.

The damesell gan her up sette,  
 And bad her maydenes her fette,  
 To hyr hondys watyr clere ; 340  
 Hyt was ydo without lette,  
 The cloth was spred, the bord was sette,  
 They wente to have sopere.  
 Mete and drynk they hadde afyn,  
 Pyement, clare and Reynysch wyn,  
 And elles greet wondyr hyt wer ;  
 Whan they had sowpeth, and the day was gon,  
 They wente to bedde, and that anoon,  
 Launfal and sche yn fere.

For play lytyll they sclepte that nyght, 350  
 Tyll on morn hyt was day-lyght,  
 She badd hym aryse anoon ;  
 Hy seyde to hym, Syr gentyl knyght,  
 And thou wilt speke with me any wyght,  
 To a derne stede thou gon.  
 Well privyly i woll come to the,  
 No man alyve ne schall me se,  
 As styll as any ston.  
 Tho was Launfal glad and blythe,  
 He cowde no man hys joye kythe, 360  
 And keste her well good won.

---

\* No such names occur in the original. Giflet (or Girflet) *le flz Mu* (alias Do) is a character in the old French romance of *Lancelot du lac*.

But of othyng, syr knyght, i warne the,  
That thou make no bost of me,  
For no kennes mede ;  
And yf thou doost, y warny the before,  
All my love thou hast forlore :  
And thus to hym sche seyde.  
Launfal tok hys leve to wende,  
Gyfre kedde that he was hende,  
And brought Launfal hys stede ;  
Launfal lepte ynto the arseoun,  
And rood hom to Karlyoun,  
In hys pover wede.

Tho was the knyght yn herte at wyllē,  
In his chaunber he hyld him styllē,  
All that undern-tyde ;  
Than come ther thorwgh the cytē ten  
Well yharneysyth men  
Upon ten somers ryde.  
Some wyth sylver, some wyth gold,  
All to syr Launfal hyt schold,  
To presente hym wyth pryde ;  
Wyth ryche clothes and armure bryght,  
They axede aftyr Launfal the knyght,  
Whar he gan abyde.

The yong men wer clodeth yn Ynde,  
Gyfre he rood all behynde,  
Up Blaunchard whyt as flour ;  
Tho seyde a boy, that yn the market stod,  
How fer schall all thys good ? 390  
Tell us pur amour.  
Tho seyde Gyfre, Hyt ys ysent  
To syr Launfal yn present,  
That hath leved yn greet dolour.  
Than seyde the boy, Nys he but a wrecche ?  
What thar any man of hym recche ?\*  
At the meyrys hous he taketh sojour.

\* Mr. Ellis, who published this romance, for the first time at the end of the second volume of "the *fabliaux* or tales" of his deceased friend, G. L. Way, Esq., has strangely misconceived this simple passage; supposing AWRECHE, as it is

At the merys hous they gon alyghte,  
 And presented the noble knyghte  
 Wyth swych good as hym was sent ;  
 And whan the meyr seygh that rychesse,  
 And syr Launfales noblenesse,  
 He held hym self foule yschent.  
 Tho seyde the meyr, Syr, pur charyte,  
 In halle to day that thou wylt etc with me,  
 Yesterday y hadde yment  
 At the feste we wolde han be yn same,  
 And y hadde solas and game,  
 And erst thou were ywent.

“Syr meyr, god foryelde the, +10  
 Whyles y was yn my poverté,  
 Thou bede me never dyne :  
 Now y have more gold and fe,  
 That myne frendes han sent me,  
 Than thou and alle dyne.”  
 The meyr for schame away yede,  
 Launfal yn purpure gan hym schrede,  
 Ipelvred with whyt ermyne ;  
 All that Launfal had borwyth before  
 Gyfre, be tayle and be score, +20  
 Yald hyt well and fyne.

Launfal helde ryche festes,  
 Fyfty fedde povere gestes,  
 That in myscaef wer ;  
 Fyfty boughte stronge stedes,  
 Fyfty yaf ryche wedes,  
 To knyghtes and squyere,  
 Fyfty rewardede relygyons.  
 Fyfty delyverede povere prysouns,  
 And made ham quyt and schere : +30  
 Fyfty clodede gestours,  
 To many men he dede honours,  
 In countreys fer and nere.

---

there printed to be one word, and the meaning, “He is not without his *REVENGE* (*i.e.*, *COMPENSATION*) whatever any man may think of him.” The boy, however, manifestly intends our seedy knight no compliment in the question he asks—“Is he aught,” says he, “but a wretch (or beggarly rascal?) What does anyone care for him?”



Alle the lordes of Karlyoun  
 Lette crye a turnement yn the toun,  
     For love of syr Launfel,  
 And for Blaunchard, hys good stede,  
 To wyte how hym wold spede,  
     That was ymade so well.  
 And whan the day was ycome, 440  
 That the justes were yn ynome,  
     They ryde out al so snell,  
 Trompours gon har bemes blowe,  
 The lordes ryden out a-rowe.  
     That were yn castell.

Ther began the turnement,  
 And ech knyght leyd on other good dent,  
     Wyth mases and wyth swerdes bothe ;  
 Me myghte ysé some, therfore  
 Stedes ywonne, and some ylore, 450  
     And knyghtes\* wonther wroghth.  
 Syth the rounde table was  
 A bettere turnement ther nas,  
     I dar well say for sothe,  
 Many a lorde of Karlyoun  
 That day were ybore adoun,  
     Certayn withouten othe.

Of Karlyoun the ryche constable  
 Rod to Launfall, without fable,  
     He nolde no lengere abyde ; 460  
 He smot to Launfal, and he to hym,  
 Well sterne strokes, and well grym,  
     Ther wer in eche a syde.  
 Launfal was of hym yware,  
 Out of his sadell he hym bar,  
     To grounde that ylke tyde,  
 And whan the constable was bore adoun,  
 Gyfre lepte ynto the arsoun,  
     And away he gan to ryde.

---

\* The original reading is "kyztes."

The erl of Chestere thereof segh, 470  
 For wrethe yn herte he was wod negh,

And rood to syr Launfale,  
 And smot hym yn the helm on hegh.  
 That the crest adoun fleggh,

Thus seyde the Frenssch tale.  
 Launfal was mochel of myght,  
 Of hys stede he did hym lyght,  
 And bar hym down yn the dale ;  
 Than come ther syr Launfal abowte  
 Of Walssche knyghtes a greet rowte, 480  
 The numbre y not how fale.

Than myghte me se scheldes ryve,  
 Speres to-breste and to-dryve,  
 Behynde and ek before,  
 Thorough Launfal and hys stedes dent,  
 Many a knyght, verement,  
 To ground was ibore.

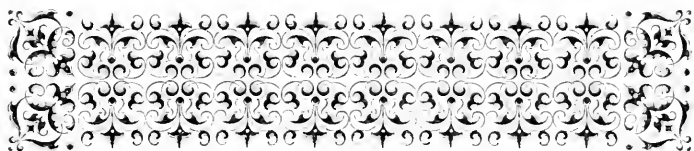
So the prys of that turnay  
 Was delyvered to Launfal that day,  
 Without oth yswore ; 490  
 Launfal rod to Karlyoun.  
 To the meyrys hous yn the toun,  
 And many a lord hym before.

And than the noble knyght Launfal  
 Helde a feste ryche and ryall,

That leste fourtenyght,  
 Erles and barouns fale  
 Semely wer sette yn sale,  
 And ryaly were adyght.

And every day dame Triamour, 500  
 Sche com to syr Launfal bour,

A day when hyt was nyght,  
 Of all that ever wer ther tho,  
 Segh he non bot they two,  
 Gyfre and Launfal the knyght.



## LAUNFAL.

### PART II.

A knyght ther was yn Lumbardye,\*  
To syr Launfal hadde he greet envye,  
Syr Valentyne he hyghte ;  
He herde speke of syr Launfal,  
That he couth justy well, 510  
And was a man of mochel myghte.  
Syr Valentyne was wonther strong,  
Fyftene feet he was longe,  
Hym thoghte he brente bryghte  
Bnt he myghte with Launfal pleye,  
In the feld betwene ham tweye,  
To justy, other to fyghte.

Syr Valentyne sat yn hys halle,  
Hys massengere he let ycalle,  
And seyde he moste wende 520  
To syr Launtal the noble knyght,  
That was yholde so mychel of myght,  
To Bretayne he wolde hym sende ;  
And sey hym, for love of hys lemman,  
Yf sche be any gentyle woman,  
Courteys, fre, other hende,  
That he come with me to juste,  
To kepe hys harneys from the ruste,  
And elles hys manhood schende.

---

\* This episode, the introduction of the mayor of Carleon, and his daughter, even the name of that place, and several other incidents, are entirely owing to the English poet, there being nothing of this sort in the original.

The messengere ys forth ywent, 530  
 To tho hys lordys commaundement,  
 He hadde wynde at wylle  
 Whan he was over the water ycome,  
 The way to Launfal he hath ynome,  
 And grette hym with wordes styлле :  
 And seyð, Syr, my lord, syr Valentyne,  
 A noble werroure, and queynte of gynne,  
 Hath me sent the tylle ;  
 And prayeth the, for thy lemmanes sake,  
 Thou schuldest with hym justes take. 540  
 Tho lough Launfal full styлле.

And seyde, as he was gentyl knyght,  
 Thylke day a fourtenyght,  
 He wold wyth hym play.  
 He yaf the messenger, for that tydyng,  
 A noble courser and a ryng,  
 and a robe of ray,  
 Launfal tok leve at Tryamour,  
 That was the bryght berde yn bour,  
 And keste that swete may ; 550  
 Thanne seyde that swete wyght,  
 Dreed the nothyng, syr gentyl knyght,  
 Thou schalt hym sle that day.

Launfal nolde nothyng wyth hym have,  
 But Blaunchard hys stede, and Gyfre hys knave,  
 Of all hys fayr maynè ;  
 He schyppede and hadde wynd well good,  
 And wente over the solte flod,  
 Into Lumbardye.  
 Whan he was over the water ycome, 560  
 Ther the justes schulde be nome,  
 In the cyté of Atalye,  
 Syr Valentyn hadde a greet ost,  
 And syr Launfal abatede her bost,  
 Wyth lytyll cumpanye.

And whan syr Launfal was ydyght,  
 Upon Blaunchard hys stede lyght,  
 With helm, and spere, and schelde,

All that sawe hym yn armes bryght,  
And seyde they sawe never swych a knyght,      570  
    That hym with eyen beheld.  
Tho ryde togydere thes knyghtes two,  
That har schaftes to-broste bo,  
    And to-scyverede yn the felde ;  
Another cours togedere they rod,  
That syr Launfal helm of glod,  
    In tale as hyt ys telde.

Syr Valentyn logh, and hadde good game,  
Hadde Launfal never so moche schame,  
    Beforhond yn no fyght ;      580  
Gyfre kedde he was good at nede,  
And lepte upon hys maystrys stede,  
    No man ne segh with syght.  
And er than thay togedere mette,  
Hys lordes helm he on sette,  
    Fayre and well adyght ;  
Tho was Launfal glad and blythe,  
And donkede Gyfre many syde,  
    For hys dede so mochel of myght.

Syr Valentyne smot Launfal soo,      590  
That hys scheld fel hym fro,  
    Anoon ryght yn that stounde ;  
And Gyfre the scheld up hente,  
And broghte hyt hys lord to presente,  
    Er hyt cam thoun to grounde.  
Tho was Launfal glad and blythe,  
And rode ayen the thrydde syde,  
    As a knyght of mochel mounde ;  
Syr Valentyne he smot so there,  
That hors and mon bothe deed were,      600  
    Gronyng wyth grysly wounde.

Alle the lordes of Atalye  
To syr Launfal hadde greet envye,  
    That Valentyne was yslawe,

And swore that he schold dye,  
 Er he wente out of Lumbardye,  
 And be hongede, and to-drawe.  
 Syr Launfal brayde out hys fathon,  
 And as lyght as dew he leyde hem doune,  
 In a lytyll drawe,  
 And whan he hadde the lordes selayn,  
 He went ayen ynto Bretayn,  
 Wyth solas and wyth plawe.

610

The tydyng com to Artour the kyng,  
 Anoon wythout lesyng,  
 Of syr Launfales noblesse,  
 Anoon a letter to hym sende,  
 That Launfal schuld to hym wende,  
 At seynt Jonnys masse.  
 For kyng Artour would a feste holde,  
 Of erles and of barouns bolde,  
 Of lordynges more and lesse ;  
 Syr Launfal schud be stward of halle,  
 For to agye hys gestes alle,  
 For cowthe of largesse.

620

Launfal toke leve at Tryamour,  
 For to wende to kyng Artour,  
 Hys feste for to agye,  
 Ther he fond merthe and moch honour,  
 Ladyes that wer well bryght yn bour,  
 Of knyghtes greet cumpanye.  
 Fourty dayes leste the feste,  
 Ryche, ryall, and honeste,  
 What help hyt for to lye ?  
 And at the fourty dayes ende,  
 The lordes toke har leve to wende,  
 Everych yn hys partye.

630

And aftyr mete syr Gaweyn,  
 Syr Gyeryes, and Agrafayn,  
 And syr Launfal also,

640

Wente to daunce upon the grene,  
Unther the tour ther lay the quene,  
Wyth sixty ladyes and mo.  
To lede the daunce Launfale was set,  
For hys largesse he was lovede the bet,  
Sertayn of alle tho ;  
The quene lay out and beheld hem alle,  
I se, sche seyde, daunce large Launfalle,  
To hym than wyll y go.

Of alle the knyghtes that ye se there, 650  
He ys the fayreste bachelere,  
He ne hadde never no wyf ;  
Tyde me good, other ylle,  
I wyll go and wyte hys wyll,  
Y love hym as my lyf.  
Sche tok with her a companye,  
The fayrest that sche myghte aspye,  
Sixty ladyes and fyf,  
And went hem doun anoon ryghtes, 660  
Ham to pley among the knyghtes,  
Well styll wythouten stryf.

The quene yede to the formeste ende,  
Betwene Launfal and Gauweyn the hende,  
And after her ladyes bryght,  
To daunce they wente alle yn same,  
To se hem play hyt was fayr game,  
A lady and a knyght.  
They hadde menstrales of moch honours,  
Fydeler, sytolys, and trompours, 670  
And elles hyt were unryght ;  
Ther they playde, for sothe to say,  
After mete the somerys day,  
All what hyt was neygh nyght.

And whanne the daunce began to slake,  
The quene gan Launfal to counsell take,  
And seyde yn thys manere :  
Sertaynlyche, syr knyght,  
I have the lovyd wyth all my myght,  
More than thys seven yere.

But that thou lovye me, 680  
Sertes y dye for love of the,  
    Launfal, my lemman dere.  
Than answerede the gentyll knyght,  
I nell be traytour thay ne nyght,  
    Be god, that all may stere.

Sche seyde, Fy on the, thou coward,  
An hongeth worth thou hye and hard,  
    That thou ever were ybore,  
That thou lyvest hyt ys pytè,  
Thou lovyst no woman, ne no woman the, 690  
    Thow wer worthy forlore.  
The knyght was sore aschamed tho,  
To speke ne myghte he forgo,  
    And seyde the quene before :  
I have loved a fayryr woman,  
Than thou ever leydest thy ney upon,  
    Thys seven yer and more.

Hyr lothlokste mayde, wythoute wene,  
Myghte bet be a quene  
    Than thou in all thy lyve. 700  
Therfore the quene was swythe wrought,  
Sche taketh hyr maydenes, and forth hy goth,  
    Into her tour also blyve,  
And anon sche ley down yn hyr bedde,  
For wrethe syk sche hyr bredde,  
    And swore, so moste sche thryve,  
Sche wold of Launfal be so awreke,  
That all the lond schuld of hym speke,  
    Wythinne the dayes fyfe.

King Artour com fro huntynge, 710  
Blythe and glad yn all thyng,  
    To hys chamber than wente he,  
Anoone the quene on hym gan crye,  
But y be awreke, y schall dye,  
    Myn herte wyll breke athre,



I spak to Launfal yn my game,  
 And he besofte me of schame,  
     My lemman for to be ;  
 And of a lemman hys yelp he made,  
 That the lodlokest mayde that sche hadde      720  
     Myght be a quene above me.

Kyng Artour was well worth,  
 And be god he swor hys oth,  
     That Launfal schuld be slawe ;  
 He wente aftyr doghty knyghtes,  
 To brynge Launfal anoon ryghtes,  
     To be hongeth and to-drawe.  
 The knyghtes softe hym anoon,  
 But Launfal was to hys chamber gon,  
     To han hadde solas and plawe ;      730  
 He softe hys leef, but sche was lore,  
 As sche hadde warnede hym before,  
     Tho was Launfal unfawe.

He lokede yn hys alner,  
 That fond hym spendyng all plener,  
     Whan that he hadde nede,  
 And ther nas noon, for soth to say,  
 And Gyfre was yryde away,  
     Up[on] Blaunchard hys stede.  
 All that he hadde before ywonne,      740  
 Hyt malt as snow ayens the sunne,  
     In romaunce as we rede ;  
 Hys armur, that was whyt as flour,  
 Hyt becom of blak colour,  
     And thus than Launfal seyde :

Alas, he seyde, my creature,  
 How schall i from the endure,  
     Swetyng Tryamour ?  
 All my joye i have forlore,  
 And the that me ys worst sore,      750  
     Thou blysful berde yn bour.\*

\* "These two lines," at least in Mr. Ellis's edition, he says, "are rather obscure ;" but that obscurity was merely occasioned by his printing THAN for THOU. The perspicacious editor, nevertheless, saw how the original must have been. Another typographical error, in that edition, has been the cause of his explaining *soth* (misprinted *for*) by *sure*.

He bet hys body and hys hedde ek,  
 And cursede the mouth that he wyth spek,  
     Wyth care and greet dolour ;  
 And, for sorow, yn that stounde,  
 Anoon he fell aswowe to grounde ;  
     Wyth that come knyghtes four,

And bond hym, and ladde hym tho,  
 Tho was the knyghte yn doble wo,  
     Before Artour the kyng. 760  
 Than seyde kyng Artour,  
 Fyle ataynte traytour !

Why madest thou swyche yelpyng ?  
 That thy lemmannes lodlokest mayde  
 Was fayrer than my wyf, thou seyde,  
     That was a fowl lesynge ;  
 And thou besoftest her before than,  
 That sche schold be thy lemman,  
     That was mysprowd lykyng.

The knyght answerede, with egre mode, 770  
 Before the kyng ther he stode,

    The quene on hym gan lye :  
 " Sethe that y ever was yborn.  
 I besofte her here befor  
     Never of no folye.

But sche seyde y nas no man,  
 Ne that me lovede no woman,  
     Ne no womannes companye ;  
 And i answerede her and sayde,  
 That my lemmannes lodlekest mayde 780  
     To be a quene was better wordye.

Sertes, lordynges, hyt ys so,  
 I am a redy for to tho  
     All that the court wyll loke.  
 To say the soth, wythout les,  
 All togedere how hyt was,  
     Twelve knyghtes wer dryve to boke.  
 All they seyde ham betwene,  
 That knewe the maners of the quene,  
     And the queste toke ; 790

The quene bar los of swych a word,  
That sche lovede lemmannes wythout her lord,  
Har never on hyt forsoke.

Therfor they seyden alle,  
Hyt was long on the quene, and not on Launfal,  
Therof they gonne hym skere ;  
And yf he myghte hys lemman brynge,  
That he made of swych yelpynge,  
Other the maydenes were  
Bryghtere than the quene of hewe, 800  
Launfal schuld be holde trewe,  
Of that yn all manere ;  
And yf he myghte not brynge hys lef,  
He schud be hongede as a thef,  
They seyden all yn fere.

Alle yn fere they made proferynge,  
That Launfal schuld hys lemman brynge :  
Hys heed he gan to laye.  
Than seyde the quene, wythout lesynge,  
Yyf he bryngeth a fayrer thyng, 810  
Put out my ceyn gray.  
Whan that wajowr was take on honde,  
Launfal therto two borwes fonde,  
Noble knyghtes twayn,  
Syr Percevall, and syr Gawayn,  
They wer hys borwes, soth to sayn,  
Tyll a certayn day.

The certayn day, i yow plyght,  
Was twelve moneth and fourtenyght,  
That he schuld hys lemman brynge ; 820  
Syr Launfal, that noble knyght,  
Greet sorow and care yn hym was lyght,  
Hys hondys he gan wrynge.  
So greet sorowe hym was upan,  
Gladlyche hys lyf he wold a forgon,  
In care and in marnynge ;  
Gladlyche he wold hys hed forgo,  
Everych man therfore was wo,  
That wyste of that tydynge.

The certayn day was nyghyng, 830  
 Hys borowes hym broght befor the kyng,  
 The kyng recordede tho,  
 And bad hym bryng hys lef yn syght,  
 Syr Launfal seyde that he ne myght,  
 Therfore hym was well wo.  
 The kyng commaundede the barouns alle,  
 To yeve jugement on Launfal,  
 And dampny hym to selo.  
 Than seyde the erl of Corneweyle,  
 That was wyth ham at that counceyle, 840  
 We wylyd naght do so :

Greet schame hyt wor us alle upon  
 For to dampny that gentylman,  
 That hath be hende and fre ;  
 Therfor, lordynges, doth be my reed,  
 Our kyng, we wylyth another wey lede,  
 Out of lond! Launfal schall fle.  
 And as they stod thus spekyng,  
 The barouns sawe come rydyng  
 Ten maydenes bryght of ble, 850  
 Ham thoghte they were so bryght and schere,  
 That the lodlokest, wythout wene,  
 Har quene than myghte be.

Tho seyde Gawayn, that corteys knyght,  
 Launfal, brodyr, drede the no wyght,  
 Her cometh thy lemman hende.  
 Launfal answerede, and seyde Y wys,  
 Non of ham my lemman nys,  
 Gawayn, my lefly frende.  
 To that castell they wente ryghte, 860  
 At the gate they gonne alyght,  
 Befor kyng Artour gonne they wende,  
 And bede hym make a redy hastily  
 A fayr chamber for her lady,  
 That was come of kinges kende.

Ho ys your lady ? Artour seyde.  
 Ye schull y wyte, seyde the mayde,  
 For sche cometh ryde.

The kyng commaundede, for her sake,  
The fayryst chaunber for to take, 870  
In hys palys that tyde.

And anon to hys barouns he sente,  
For to yeve jugement  
Upon that traytour full of pryde ;  
The barouns answerede, anoon ryght,  
Have we seyn the madenes bryght,  
Whe schull not longe abyde.

A newe tale they gonne tho,  
Some of wele, and some of wo,  
Har lord the kyng to queme, 880  
Some dampnede Launfal there,  
And some made hym quyt and skere,  
Har tales wer well breme.  
Tho saw they other ten maydenes bryght,  
Fayryr than the other ten of syght,  
As they gone hym deme,  
They ryd upon joly moyles of Spayne,  
With sadell and brydell of Champayne,  
Her lorayns lyght gonne leme.

They wer yclodeth yn samyt tyre, 890  
Ech man hadde greet desyre  
To se har clodynge.  
Tho seyde Gaweyn, that curtayse knyght,  
Launfal, her cometh thy swete wyght,  
That may thy bote brynge.  
Launfal answerede, with drery doght,  
And seyde, Alas, y knowe her noght,  
Ne non of all the ofsprynge.  
Forth they wente to that palys,  
And lyghte at the hyc deys, 900  
Before Artour the kyng.

And grette the kyng and quene ek,  
And oo mayde thys wordes spak,  
To the kyng Artour,  
Thyn halle agrayde and hele the walles,  
Wyth clodes and wyth ryche palles,  
Ayens my lady Tryamour.

The kyng answerede bedene,  
 Well come, ye maydenes schene,  
     Be our lord the savyour. 910  
 He commaundede Launcelot du Lake to brynge hem  
     yn fere,  
 In the chamber ther har felawes were,  
     Wyth merthe and moche honour.

Anoon the quene suppose gyle  
 That Launfal schulld yn a whyle  
     Be ymade quyt and skere,  
 Thorough hys lemman that was commynge,  
 Anon sche seyde to Artour the kyng,  
     Syre, curtays yf [thou] were,  
 Or yf thou lovedest thyn honour, 920  
 I schuld be awreke of that traytour,  
     That doth me changy chere,  
 To Launfal thou schuldest not spare,  
 Thy barouns dryveth the to bysmare.  
     He ys hem lef and dere.

And as the quene spak to the kyng,  
 The barouns seygh come rydyng  
     A damesele alone,  
 Upoon a whyt comely palfrey,  
 They saw never non so gay, 930  
     Upon the grounde gone.  
 Gentyll, jolyf, as bryd on bowe,  
 In all manere fayr inowe,  
     To wonye yn worldly wone,  
 The lady was bryght as blosme on brere,  
 Wyth eyen gray, wyth lovelych chere,  
     Her leyre lyght schoone.

As rose on rys her rode was red,  
 The her schon upon her hed,  
     As gold wyre that schynyth bryght ; 940  
 Sche hadde a croune upon her molde,  
 Of ryche stones and of golde,

That lossom lemede lyght.  
The lady was clad yn purpere palle,  
Wyth gentyll body and myddyl small,  
That semely was of syght ;  
Her mantyll was furryth with whyt ermyn,  
Ireversyd jolyf and fyn,  
No rychere be ne myght.

Her sadell was semyly sett, 950  
The sambus wer grene felvet,  
Ipaynted with ymagerye,  
The bordure was of belles,  
Of ryche gold and nothing elles,  
That any man myghte aspye.  
In the arsouns, before and behynde,  
Were twey stones of Ynde,  
Gay for the maystrye ;  
The paytrelle of her palfraye,  
Was worth an erldome, stoute and gay, 960  
The best yn Lumbardye.

A gerfawcon sche bar on her hond,  
A softe pas her palfray fond,  
That men her schuld beholde ;  
Thorugh Karlyon rood that lady,  
Twey whyte grehoundys ronne hyr by,  
Har colers were of golde.  
And whan Launfal sawe that lady,  
To alle the folk he gon crye an hy,  
Both to yonge and olde, 970  
Her, he seyde, comyth my lemman swete,  
Sche myghte me of my balys bete,  
Yef that lady wolde.

Forth sche wente ynto the halle,  
Ther was the quene and the ladyes alle,  
And also kyng Artour,  
Her maydenes come ayens her ryght,  
To take her styrop whan sche lyght,  
Of the lady dame Tyramour.

Sche dede of her mantyll on the flet, 980  
 That men schuld her beholde the bet,  
     Wythoute a more sojour,  
 Kyng Artour gan her sayre grete,  
 And sche hym agayn, with wordes swete,  
     That were of greet valour.

Up stod the quene and ladyes stoute,  
 Her for to beholde all aboute,  
     How evene sche stod upryght;  
 Than wer they wyth her also donne,  
 As ys the mone ayen the sonne, 990  
     A day whan hyt ys lyght.  
 Than seyde sche to Artour the kyng,  
 Syr, hydyr i com for swych a thyng,  
     To skere Launfal the knyght,  
 That he never, yn no folye,  
 Besofte the quene of no drurye,  
     By dayes ne be nyght.

Therfor, syr kyng, good kepe thou myne,  
 He bad naghth her, but sche bad hym,  
     Here lemman for to be; 1000  
 And he answerede her and seyde,  
 That hys lemmannes lothlokest mayde  
     Was fayryr than was sche.  
 Kyng Artour seyde, wythoute nothe,  
 Ech may ysè that ys sothe,  
     Bryghtere that ye be.  
 Wyth that dame Tryamour to the quene geth,  
 And blew on her swych a breth,  
     That never eft myght sche se.

The lady lep an hyr palfray, 1010  
 And bad hem alle have good day,  
     Sche nolde no lengere abyde;  
 Wyth that com Gyfre all so prest,  
 Wyth Launfalys stede out of the forest,  
     And stod Launfal besyde.  
 The knyght to horse began to sprynge,  
 Anoon wythout any lettynge,  
     Wyth hys lemman away to ryde;



The lady tok her maydenys achon,  
And wente the way that sche hadde er gon, 1020  
Wyth solas and wyth pryde.

The lady rod dorth Cardevyle,  
Fer ynto a jolyf ile,  
Olyroun that hyghte ;  
Every yer upon a certayn day,  
Me may here Launfales stede nay,  
And hym se with syght.  
Ho that wyll there axsy justus,  
To kepe hys armes fro the rustus,  
In turnement other fyght ; 1030  
Dar he never forther gon,  
Ther he may fynde justes anoon,  
Wyth syr Launfal the knyght.

Thus Launfal, wythouten fable,  
That noble knyght of the rounde table,  
Was take yn to the fayrye ;  
Seththe saw hym yn thys lond no man,  
Ne no more of hym telle y ne can,  
For sothe, wythout lye.  
Thomas Chestre made thys tale, 1040  
Of the noble knyght syr Launfale,  
Good of chyvalrye.  
Jhesus, that ys hevene kyng,  
Yeve us alle hys blessing,  
And hys modyr Marye !







## LYBEAUS DISCONUS.\*

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THIS ancient romance is preserved in the Cotton MS. already mentioned, marked Caligula A. II. from which it is here given. About the latter half of another copy is in one of Sir Matthew Hales' MSS. in the library of Lincoln's Inn, apparently a different translation, but only containing, as usual, numberless various readings of little consequence; a third is said by Dr. Percy to be in his folio MS. It was certainly printed before the year 1600, being mentioned, by the name of "Libbius," in "Vertue's common wealth; or The highway to honour," by Henry Crosse, published in that year; and is even alluded to by Skelton, who died in 1529:—

"And of Sir Libius named Disconius."

The French original is unknown.

A story similar to that which forms the principal subject of the present poem may be found in the "Voiage and travaile of sir John Maundeville" (London, 1725, 8vo, p. 28). It, likewise, by some means, has made its way into a pretendedly ancient Northumberland ballad, entitled "The laidlly worm of Spindlestoneheugh," written, in reality, by Robert Lambe, vicar of Norham, author of "The history of chess," &c, who had, however, heard some old stanzas, of which he availed himself, sung by a maid-servant. The remote original of all these stories was, probably,

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\* i.e. *Le Beau desconnu*, or the fair unknown. The running-title is ever after uniformly *Desconus*; but the editor thought himself at liberty to follow the head, which bears *Disconus*; and had proceeded too far before he began to doubt the propriety of his conduct. It is never *Disconus* in the text. Mr. Tyrwhitt, however, so prints it.

much older than the time of Herodotus, by whom it is related (Urania).

Chaucer, in his "Rime of sire Thopas," among the "romances of pris" there enumerated, mentions those

"Of sire Libeaux and Pleindamour,"

(as Tyrwhitt reads after all the MSS. truly, and the old printed copies having Blandamoure, or Blaindamoure); upon which the learned and ingenious editor of the "Reliques of ancient English poetry," in the first three editions of that work, remarks that "As sir [Pleindamour or] Blandamoure, no romance with this title has been discovered; but as the word occurs in that of *Libeaux*, 'tis possible Chaucer's memory deceived him: a remark, in which he is implicitly followed by his friend Warton, who says, "Of sir Blandamoure, I find nothing more than the name occurring in Sir Lebeaux" (History of English Poetry, I, 208); which he, most certainly, did not there find. "Even the titles of our old romances," he says, "such as Sir Blandamoure, betray their French extraction." (*Ib.* 139.) From the fourth and last edition, however, of the said Reliques, we now learn that the word in question is neither Pleindamour nor Blandamoure, but Blaundemere, which is foreign to the purpose; neither does any such name occur in the present copy; nor, as the passage is carefully suppressed by the right reverend possessor, can one venture to imagine whether it be that of a man, a woman, or a horse.\* This force of tergiversation has, to use the worthy prelate's own words, "destroyed all confidence."

Generally speaking, the Cotton MS. has *z* for *y* or *gh*, and *y* for *th*. The rhymes also of the third and sixth lines of every two stanzas are the same, except in a few instances, which have rendered it necessary to disregard that circumstance.

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\* This *venerabilisfimus episcopus* had the address to persuade a gentleman to whom he shewed his folio MS. and whose testimony was to convince the scepticism of the present editor, that he actually saw the word *Blandamoure*, which, it now turns out, does not exist; though he would not suffer him to transcribe the line in which it occurred: he will easily recollect his name: upon a different occasion he gave Mr. Steevens a transcript from the above MS. of the vulgar ballad of *Old Simon the king*, with a strict injunction not to show it to this editor (who suspected, as the fact turned out, that he had sophisticated it, in a note to the last edition of Shakespeare), which, however, he immediately brought to him.



## LYBEAUS DISCONUS.

JHESU CRYST, our savyour,  
 And hys modyr, that swete flour,  
     Helpe hem at her nede  
 That harkeneth of a conquerour,  
 Wys of wytte and whyght werroure,  
     And doughty man in dede.  
 Hys name was called Geynleyn,  
*begin* Beyete he was of syr Gaweyn,  
     Be a forest syde ;  
 Of stouter knyght, and profytable,  
 Wyth Artour of the rounde table,\*  
     Ne herde ye never rede.

10

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\* This famous table, to which were attached one hundred knights, was the property of Leodegrance, king of Camelard, who appears to have had it from Uther Pendragon, for whom it had been made by the sorcerer Merlin, in token, as the book says, of the roundness of the world, (or, according to his own romance), in imitation of one established by Joseph of Arimathea, in the name of that which Jesus had made at the supper of the twelve apostles, (see vol. I. fo. 40, &c.), and came to king Arthur, as the portion of his wife Guenever, daughter of that monarch. Every knight had his seat, in which was his name, written in letters of gold. One of these was "the siege perillous," where no man was to sit but one: an honour reserved for Sir Galaad, the son of Lancelot du Lake. "King Arthur," according to the history, "stablished all his knights, and gave them lands that were not rich of land, and charged them never to do outrage nor murder, and always to fle treason. Also, by no means, to be cruel, but to give mercy unto him that asked mercy, upon paine of forfeiture of their worship, and lordship of king Arthur, for evermore, and alway to do ladies, damosels, and gentlewomen, succour upon paine of death. Also that no man take no batailles in a wrong quarell for no law, nor for wordly goods. Unto this were all the knights sworne of the round table, both old and young.' *Mort d'Arthur*, Part I., C. 59. It is not once mentioned by Geoffrey of Monmouth,

Thys Gynleyn was fayr of syght,  
 Gentyll of body, of face bryght,  
 All bastard yef he were ;  
 Hys modyr kepte hym yn clos,  
 For douute of wykkede loos,  
 As doughty chyld and dere.

And for love of hys fayr vyys,  
 Hys modyr clepede hym *Beufys*, *l'a* 20  
 And no nothyr name ;  
 And hymself was full nys,  
 He ne axede naght, y wys,  
 What he hyght, at hys dame.  
 As hyt befelle upon a day,  
 To wode he wente, on hys play,  
 Of dere to have hys game ;  
 He fond a knyght whar he lay,  
 In armes that wer stout and gay,  
 Isclayne, and made full tame. 30

That chyld dede of the knyghtes wede,  
 And anon he gan hym schrede,  
 In that ryche armur ;  
 Whan he hadde do that dede,  
 To Glastynbery he yede,  
 Ther ley the kyng Artour.

He knelede yn the halle,  
 Before the knyghtes alle,  
 And grette hem with honour ;  
 And seyde, Kyng Artour, my lord, 40  
 Graunte me to speke a word,  
 I pray the pur amour.

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though Master Wace, not twenty years after the time of that unworthy prelate,  
 thus speaks of it :—

“ *Fist Artur la ronde table,  
 Dunt Breton dient meinte fable.*”

Than seyde Artour the kyng,  
 Anoon without any dwellyng,  
     Tell me thyn name uplyght,  
 For sethen y was ybore,  
 Ne fond y me before  
     Non so fayr of syght.

That chylde seyde, Be seynt Jame,  
 I not what ys my name, 50  
     I am the more nys ;  
 But, whyle y was at hame,  
 My modyr, yn her game,  
     Clepede me *Beau fyz*.  
 Than seyde Artour the kyng,  
 Thys ys a wonder thyng,  
     Be god and seynt Denys,  
 Whanne he that wolde be a knyght,  
 Ne wat noght what he hyght,  
     And ys so fayr of vys. 60

Now wyll y yeve hym a name,  
 Before yow alle yn same,  
     For he ys so fayr and fre ;  
 Be god, and be seynt Jame,  
 So clepede hym never hys dame,  
     What woman that so hyt be.  
 Now clepeth hym alle yn us  
*Lybeaux desconus*.  
     For the love of me ; \*  
 Than may ye wete a row 70  
 The fayre unknowe,  
     Sertes so hatte he.

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\* Giglan, the natural son of Gawain and the fairy *Blanchewallee*, appears at the court of king Arthur ; and, being asked his name, says that his mother (who had carefully concealed it) had never called him anything but *Beaufils* ; in consequence of which the queen gives him that of *Le bel inconnu*. (*Histoire de Giglan*, n. d. 4to. g. l.) In this romance the lady is called Helen ; but the main incidents bear little or no resemblance to those of *Lybeaus*. See also the episode or adventure of *Beaumains*, in Sir Thomas Malory's *Mort d'Arthur*.

In the *Promptorium parvulorum* (Har. MS. 221) *Befyce* is explained *filius*.

Kyng Artour anon ryght  
 Made hym tho a knyght,  
     In the selve day ;  
 And yaf hym armes bryght,  
 Hym gertte wyth swerde of myght,  
     For sothe as y yow say.  
 And henge on hym a scheld,  
 Ryche and over geld  
     Wyth a griffoun of say ;  
 And hym betok hys fader Gaweyn,  
 For to teche hym on the playne,  
     Of ech knyghtes play.

80

Whan he was knyght imade,  
 Anon a bone there he bad,  
     And seyde, My lord so fre,  
 In herte y were ryght glad,  
 That ferste fyghte yf y had,  
     That ony man asketh the.  
 Thanne seyde Artour the kyng,  
 I grante the thyn askyng,  
     What batayle that so hyt be ;  
 But me thyngeth thou art to ying,  
 For to done a good fyghtyng,  
     Be awght that y can se.

90

Wythoute more resoun,  
 Duk, erl, and baroun,  
     Whesch and yede to mete ;\*

\* It was a constant custom, in former times, to wash the hands before sitting down to, and after rising up from table. Thus, in *Emare*, V. 217 :—

“Then the lordes that wer grete,  
 They wesh and seten down to mete,  
 And folk hem served swyde.”

Again, V. 889 :—

“Then the lordes, that wer grete,  
 Wheschen ayeyn aftyr mete,  
 And then com spycerye.”

Again, in *Sir Orpheus*, V. 473 :—

“The steward wasched and wente to mete.”

Again, in *Le bone Florence of Rome*, V. 1009 :—

“Then they wysche, and to mete be gone.”

Thus, also, in *Robyne Hode and the potter*, the sheriff says—

“Let os was, and go to mete.”



Of all manere fusoun, 100  
As lordes of renoun,  
Ynowgh they hadde etc.  
Ne hadde Artour bote a whyle,  
The mountance of a myle,  
At hys table ysete,  
Ther com a mayde ryde,  
And a dwerk be here syde,  
All beswette for hete.

That mayde was clepede Elene,  
Gentyll, bryght, and schene, 110  
A lady messenger ;  
Ther nas contesse, ne quene,  
So semelych on to sene,  
That myghte be her pere.  
Sche was clodeth in Tars,  
Rowmé and nodyng skars,  
Pelvred wyth blauner ;  
Her sadell and her brydell, yn fere,  
Full of dyamandys were,  
Melk was her destrere. 120

The dwerk was clodeth yn Ynde,  
Before and ek behynde,  
Stout he was and pert ;  
Among alle Crystene kende,  
Swych on ne schold no man fynde,  
Hys surcote was overt.  
Hys berd was yelow as ony wax,  
To hys gerdell henge the plex,  
I dar well say yn certe ;  
Hys schon wer with gold ydyght, 130  
And kopeth as a knyght,  
That semede no povert.

Teandelayn was hys name,  
Well swyde sprong hys fame,  
Be north and be southe ;  
Myche he couthe of game,  
With sytole, sautrye yn same,

Harpe, fydele and crouthe.  
 He was a noble dysour,  
 Wyth ladyes of valour, 140  
     A mery man of mouthe ;  
 He spak to that mayde hende,  
 To telle thyn crynde,  
     Tyme hyt were nouthe.

That mayde knelede yn halle,  
 Before the knyghtes \* alle,  
     And greet hem wyth honour,  
 And seyde, A cas ther ys yfalle,  
 Worse wythyn walle  
     Was never non of dolour. 150  
 My lady of Synadowne  
 Is broght yn strong pryson,  
     That ys greet of valour,  
 Sche prayd the sende her a knyght,  
 With herte good and lyght,  
     To wynde her with honour.

Up start the yonge knyght,  
 Hys herte was good and lyght,  
     And seyde, Artour, my lord,  
 I schall tho that fyght, 160  
 And wynde that lady bryght,  
     Yef thou art trewe of word.  
 Than seyde Artour, That ys soth,  
 Certayn withoute noth,  
     Thereto y bere record ;  
 God grante the grace and myght,  
 To holde up that lady ryghte,  
     Wyth dente of thy sword.

Than gan Elene to chyde  
 And seyde, Alas that tyde 170  
     That i was hyder ysent !  
 Thys word schall spryng \* wyde,  
 Lord kyng now ys thy threde  
     And thy manhod yschent.

\* Original reading : *knyzte*.

† Original reading : *spyng*.

Whan thou schalt sende a chylde  
 That ys wytles and wyld,  
     To dele thoghty dent,  
 And hast knyghtes of mayn,  
 Launcelet, Perceval, and Gaweyn,  
     Prys yn ech turnement. 180

Lybeaus desconus answerde \*  
 Yet was y never aferde  
     For doute of mannys awe,  
 To fyghte wyth spere or swerd,  
 Some dell y have ylerde,  
     Ther many men were yslawe.  
 He that fleth for drede,  
 I wolde, be way or strete,  
     Hys body wer to-drawe ;  
 I wyll the batayle take, 190  
 And never on forsake,  
     As hyt ys Artours lawe.

Than seyde Artour anon ryght,  
 Thou getest none other knyght,  
     Be god that boghte me dere,  
 Yef the thyngyth hym not wyght,†  
 Go gete the on wher thou myght,  
     That be of more powere.  
 That mayde, for wreththe and hete,  
 Nolde neydyr drynke ne ete, 200  
     For alle tho that ther were,  
 But satte down all thys mayd,  
 Tyll the table was ylayd,  
     Sche and the dwerke yn fere.

Kyng Artour yn that stounde,  
 Hette of the table rounde,  
     Four the beste knyhtes,  
 In armes hole and sounde,  
 The beste that myghte be founde,  
     Arme Lybeaus anoon ryghtes. 210

\* Original reading : *answerede.*

† Original reading : *Yef he thyngeth the not wyght..*

And seyde, thorgh helpe of Cryst,  
 That in the flome tok baptyste,  
 He schall holde all hys heghtes, \*  
 And be good champyoun  
 To the lady of Synadoun,  
 And holde up alle her ryghtes.

To army thir knyghtes wer fayn,  
 The ferste was syr Gaweyn,  
 That other syr Percevale,  
 The thyrthe syr Eweyn,†  
 The ferthde was syr Agrafrayn ;  
 So seyth the Frensch tale.  
 They caste on hym a scherte of selk,  
 A gypell as whyte as melk,  
 In that semely sale ;  
 And syght an hawberk bryght,  
 That rychely was adyght,  
 Wyth mayles thykke and smale.

220

Gaweyn hys owene syre  
 Heng abowte hys swyre  
 A scheld with a gryffoun,  
 And Launcelet hym broght a sper,  
 In werre with hym well to were,  
 And also a fell fachoun.  
 And syr Oweyn hym broght a stede,  
 That was good at everych nede,  
 And egre as lyoun,  
 And an helm of ryche atyre,  
 That was stele, and noon yre,  
 Percevale sette on hys croun.

230

240

The knyght to hors gan spryng,  
 And rod to Artour the kyng,  
 And seyde, My lord hende,  
 Yef me thy blessyng,  
 Anoon wythoute dwellynge,  
 My wyll ys for to wende.

\* Original reading : *hestes*.† Original reading : *Gaweyn*.

Artour hys hond up haf,  
 And hys blessyng he hym yaf,  
     As korteyns kyng and hende ;  
 And seyde, God grante the grace,  
 And of spede space,  
     To brynge the lady out of bende.

250

The mayde, stout and gay,  
 Lep on her palfray,  
     The dwerk rod hyr besyde :  
 And tyll the thyrde day  
 Upon the knyght alwey  
     Ever sche began chyde.  
 And seyde, Lorell and kaytyf,\*  
 They thou wher worth swyche † fyfe,  
     Ytynt now ys thy pryde ;  
 Thys pase before kepeth a knyght,  
 That wyth ech man wyll fyght,  
     Hys name ys spronge wyde.

260

Wylleam Celebronche,  
 Hys fyght may no man staunch,  
     He ys werroure so wyth ;  
 Thorough herte, other thorough honche,  
 Wyth hys sper he wyll launche  
     All that ayens hym ryghtte.  
 Than seyde Lybeaus desconus,  
 Is hys feghtyng swych vys ?  
     Was he never yhytte ?  
 Whatsoever me betyde,  
 To hym y wyll ryde,  
     And loke how he sytte.

270

\* Beaumains, in his expedition to relieve the Lady Liones, is treated in a similar manner by her sister Linet ; it is a very entertaining adventure. See *Mort d'Arthur*, P 1, C. 122, &c. See, also, that of the damsel *Maledisaunt*, and the young knight nicknamed *La cote male taillé* P. 2, C. 44.

† Original reading : *swyr*.

Forth they ryden all thre,  
Wyth merthe and greet solempnyte,  
    Be a castell aunterous,  
And the knyght they gon ysè, 280  
Iarmeth bryght of ble,  
    Up on the Vale perylous.  
He bar a scheld of grene,  
Wyth thre lyouns of gold schene,  
    Well prowde and precyous,  
Of wych lengell and trappes  
To dele ech man rappes  
    Ever he was fous.

And whan he hadde of hem syght  
To hem he rod full ryght, 290  
    And seyde, Welcome, *beau frer*,  
Ho that rydyght her day other nyght  
Wyth me he mot take fyght,  
    Other leve hys armes here.  
Well, seyde Lybeaus desconus,  
For love of swete Jhesus,  
    Now let us passe skere ;  
We haveth for to wende,  
And beth fer from our frende,  
    I and thys meyde yn fere. 300

Wylleam answerede tho,  
Thou myght not skapy so,  
    So god gef me good reste,  
We wylleth er thou go  
Fyghte bothe two  
    A forlang her be-weste.  
Than seyde Lybeaus, Now y se  
That hyt nell non other be,  
    In haste tho dy beste.  
Thou take thy cours wyth schafte, 310  
Yef thou art knyght of crafte,  
    For her es myn all preste.

No lengere they nolde abyde,  
 Togedere they gonne ryde,  
     Wyth well greet randoun ;  
 Lybeaus desconus that tyde  
 Smot Wylleam yn the syde  
     Wyth a sper feloun.  
 And Wylleam sat so faste,  
 That hys styropes to-braste, 320  
     And hys hynder arsoun ;  
 Wylleam gan to stoupe  
 Mydde hys horses kroupe  
     That he fell adoun.

Hys stede ran away,  
 Wylleam ne naght longe lay,  
     But start up anoon ryght ;  
 And seyde, Be my fay,\*  
 Before thys ylke day  
     Ne fond y non so wyght. 330  
 Now my sted† ys ago,  
 Fyghte we a fote also,  
     As thou art hendy knyght.  
 Tho seyde Lybeau desconus,  
 Be the love of Jhesus,  
     Therto y am full lyght.

Togedere they gone spryng,  
 Fauchouns hy gonne out flyng,  
     And foghte fell and faste ;  
 So harde they gonne drynge 340  
 That feer, without lesynge,  
     Out of har helmes braste.  
 But Wylleam Selebraunche  
 Lybeau desconus gan lonche  
     Thorghout that scheld yn haste,  
 A kantell fell to grounde,  
 Lybeau that ylke stounde  
     In hys herthe hyt kaste.

\* Original reading : *lay*.† Original reading : *iste*.

Thanne Lybeaus wys and whyght  
Before hym as a noble knyght, 350  
    As werroure queynte and sclegh,  
Hawberk and krest yn fyght  
He made fle doun ryght  
    Of Wylleames helm and hegh.  
And wyth the poynt of hys swerd  
He schavede Wylleam ys berd,  
    And com by flessch ryght neygh ;  
Wylleam smot to hym tho,  
That hys sword brast a-two,  
    That many man hyt scygh. 360

Tho gan Wylleam to crye,  
For love or Seynt Marye,  
    Alyve let me passe ;  
Hyt wer greet vylanye  
To tho a knyght to deye  
    Wepeneles yn place.  
Than seyde Lybeaus desconus,  
For love of swete Jhesus,  
    Of lyve hast thou no grace,  
But yef thou swere an oth, 370  
Er than we two goth,  
    Ryght her before my face.

In haste knele adoun,  
And swer an my fachoun  
    Thou schalt to Artour wende,  
And sey, Lord of renoun,  
As overcome and prysoun,  
    A knyght me hyder gan sende.  
That ys yclepede yn us  
Lybeaus desconus, 380  
    Unknowe of keth and kende.  
Wylleam on knees doun sat,  
And swor as he hym hat,  
    Her forward word and ende.



Thus departede they alle,  
Wyllyam to Artours halle  
    Tok the ryghte way ;  
As kas hyt began falle  
Knyghtes proud yn palle  
    He mette that selve day. 390  
Hys susteres soncs thre  
Wher the knyghtes fre,  
    That weren so stout and gay,  
Whann they sawe Wyllyam blede,  
As men that wolde awyede,  
    They made greet deray :  
And seyde, Eem Wylleam,  
Ho hath down the thys scham,  
    That thou bledest so yerne ?  
He seyde, Be seynt Jame, 400  
On that naght to blame,  
    A knyght stout and sterne,

A dwerk ryght her before,  
Hys squyer as he wore,  
    And ek a well fayr wyght ;  
But othyng grevyth me sore,  
That he hath do me swore,  
    Upon hys fawchon bryght,  
That y ne schall never more,  
Tyll y come Artour before, 410  
    Sojourne day ne nyght,  
For prisoner i mot me yeld,  
As overcome yn feld,  
    Of hys owene knyght,  
And never ayens hym bere  
Nother scheld ne spere ;  
    All this y have hym hyght,

Thanne seyde the knyghtes thre,  
Thou schalt full well awreke be,  
    For sothe wythout fayle ; 420  
He alone ayens us thre  
Nys naght worth a stre  
    For to holde batayle.

Wend forth, eem, and do thyn othe.  
 And the traytour, be the rothe,  
     We schull hym asayle ;  
 Right, be godes grace,  
 Ther he thys forest passe  
     Thaugh he be dykke of mayle.

Now lete we Wylyam be, 430  
 That wente yn hys jorne,  
     Toward Artour the kyng ;  
 Of these knyghtes thre  
 Hearkeneth, lordynges fre,  
     A ferly fayr fyghtyng.  
 They armede hem full well,  
 Yn yren and yn stel,  
     Wythout ony dwellyng,\*  
 And lepte on stedes sterne,  
 And after gon yerne, 440  
     To sle that knyght so yenge.

Herof wyste no wyght  
 Lybeaus the yonge knyght,  
     But rod forth pas be pas ;  
 He and that mayde bryght  
 Togydere made all nyght  
     Game and greet solas.  
 Mercy hy gan hym crye  
 That hy spak vylanye,  
     He foryaf here that trespas. 450  
 De dwerke was her squyer,  
 And servede her fer and ner,  
     Of all that nede was.

A morn, whan that hyt was day,  
 They wente yn har jornay  
     Toward Synadowne,  
 Thanne saw they knyghtes thre,  
 In armes bryght of ble,  
     Ryde out of Karlowne.

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\* Original reading : *Wellyng*.

All yarmed ynto the teth,  
Everych swor hys deth,  
    And stedes baye browne,  
And cryde to hym full ryght,  
Thef, turne agayn and fyght,  
    Wyth the we denketh rounce. 460

Lybeaus desconus tho kryde,  
I am redy to ryde  
    Ayens yow all ysame.  
He prikede, as pryns yn pryde,  
Hys stede yn bothe syde, 470  
    In earnest and yn game.  
The eldest brother gan bere  
To syr Lybeaus a spere,  
    Syr Gower was hys name,  
But Lybeaus hym so nygh,  
That he brak hys thegh,  
    And ever efte he was lame.

The knyght gronede for payne,  
Lybeaus wyth myght and mayne,  
    Felde hym flat adownn ; 480  
The dwerk Tcondeleyne  
Tok the stede be the rayne,  
    And lep ynto the arsoun :  
And rod hym also sket  
Ther that the mayde set,  
    That was fayr of fasoun,  
Tho lough that mayde bryght,  
And seyde Thys yonge knyght,  
    Ys chose for champion.

The myddell brother com yerne, 490  
Upon a stede sterne,  
    Egre as lyoun,  
Hym thoghte hys body wold berne,  
But he myght also yerne  
    Fell Lybeaus adoun.

As werroure out of wytte,  
 Lybeaus on helm he smyt,  
     With a fell fachoun,  
 Hys strok so hard he set,  
 Thorgh helm and basnet, 500  
     That sword tochede hys croun.

Tho was Lybeaus agreved,  
 Whan he feld on hedde  
     That sword with egre mode,  
 Hys brond abowte he wevede,  
 All that he hyt he clevede,  
     As werroure wyld and wode.  
 Allas, he scyde tho,  
 Oon ayens two  
     To fyghte that ys good. 510  
 Wel faste they smyte to hym,  
 And he wyth strokes grym,  
     Well harde ayens hem stode.

Tho sawe these knyghtes,  
 They ne hadde no myghtes  
     To fechte ayens her fo.  
 To syr Lybeaus they gon up-yelde  
 Bothe har sperys and har schelde,  
     And mercy cryde hym tho.

Lybeaus answerede, Nay, 520  
 The ne askapeth so away,  
     Be god that schop mankende ;  
 Thou and thy brederen tway\*  
 Schull plyght her your fay,  
     To kyng Artour to wende ;  
 And sey, Lord of renounes,  
 As overcome and prysouns,  
     A knyght us hyder gan sende,  
 To dwelle yn your bandoun,†  
 And yelde you tour and toun, 530  
     Ay wythouten ende.

\* Original reading: *twayne*.

† Original reading: *bandoun*.

And but ye wyllen tho so  
Sertes y schall you slo,  
    Er than hyt be nyght ;  
The knyghtes sweren tho  
They wolde to Artour go,  
    And trewes ther they plyght.  
Thus departede day,  
Lybeaus and that may,  
    As they hadden tyght ;  
Tyll the thyrde day  
They ryde yn game and play,  
    He and that mayde bryght :

540

And ever they ryden west,  
In that wylde forest,  
    Toward Synadowne ;  
They nyste what ham was best  
Taken they wolde reste,  
    And myght not come to toun ;  
A logge they dyghte of leves,  
In the grene greves,  
    With swordes bryght and broune ;  
Therinne they dwellede all nyght,  
He and that mayde bryght,  
    That was so fayr of fasoun ;

550

And the dwerk gan wake,  
For noo thef ne schuld take  
    Har hors away with gyle ;  
For drede he gan to quake,  
For gret fer he sawe make  
    Thannes half a myle.  
Arys, he seyde, yong knyght,  
To horse that thou wer ydyght.  
    For dowte of peryle ;  
For i here greet bost,

560

And fer smelle rost,  
    Be god and seynt Gyle.  
Lybeaus was stout and fer,  
And lepte on hys destrer,  
    Hente schelde and spere ;

570

And rod toward the fyer,  
 And whanne he nyghede ner,  
     Two geauntes he saw ther.  
 That on was red and lothlych,  
 And that other swart as pych,  
     Grysly bothe of chere ;  
 That oon held yn hys barme  
 A mayde yclepte yn hys arme,  
     As bryght as blosle on brere.

The rede geaunt sterne 580  
 A wylde boor gan terne  
     Abowte upon a spyte ;  
 That fyer bryght gan berne,  
 The mayde cryde yerne  
     That som man schuld her ther wete :  
 And seyde, Wellaway !  
 That ever i bode thys day,  
     With two fendes to sette !  
 Now help, Marie mylde,  
 For love of thys chylde, 590  
     That y be nagh foryette !

Than seyde Lybeaus, Be seynt Jame,  
 To save thys mayde fro schame  
     Hyt wer a fayr apryse ;  
 To fyght with bothe yn same  
 Hyt wer no chylde's game,  
     That beth so grymme and gryse.  
 He tok hys cours wyth schafte,  
 As knyght of kende crafte,  
     And rod be ryght asyse ; 600  
 The blake geaunt he smot smert,  
 Thorgh the lyver, longe, and herte,  
     That never he myghte aryse.

Tho flawe that mayde schene,  
 And thankede hevene quene,  
     That swych socour her sente ;  
 Tho com that mayde Elene,  
 Sche and her dwerk y mene,  
     And be the hond her hente ;

And ladde her ynto the greves, 610  
Into that logge of leves,  
Wyth well good talent ;  
And prayde swete Jhesus,  
Helpe Lybeaus desconus,  
That he wer naght yschent.

The rede geaunt thore  
Smot to Lybeaus wyth the bore,  
As man that wold awede ;  
The strokes he sette so sore.  
That hys cursere therfore, 620  
Deed to grounde yede.  
Lybeaus was redy boun,  
And lepte out of the arsoun,  
As sperk thogh out of glede ;  
And egre as a lyoun,  
He faught wyth hys fachoun,  
To quite the geauntes mede.

The geaunt ever faught,  
And at the seconde draught,  
Hys spyte brak a two ; 630  
A tre yn honde he kaught,  
As a man that wer up-sawght  
To fyghte ayens hys fo.  
And wyth the ende of the tre  
He smot Lybeaus scheld a thre,  
And tho was Lybeaus well wo ;  
And er he eft the tre up haf,  
A strok Lybeaus hym yaf,  
Hys ryght arm fell hym fro.

The geaunt fell to grounde 640  
Lybeaus that ylke stounde  
Smot of hys hedde ryght  
Hym that he yaf er wounde  
In that ylke stounde,  
He servede so aplyght.  
He tok the heddes two,  
And yaf hem the mayden tho,  
That he hadde fore that fyght ;

The mayde was glad and blythe,  
And thonkede god fele syde  
That ever was he made knyght. 650

Then seyde Lybeaus, Gentyl dame,  
Tell me what ys thy name,  
And wher thou wer ybore.  
Sche seyde, Be scynt Jame,  
My fader ys of ryche name,  
Woneth her before.  
An erl, an hold hore knyght,  
That hath be a man of myght,  
Hys name ys syr Autore ; 660  
Men clepeth me Vyolette,  
For me these geauntes besette  
Our castell full yore.

Yesterday yn the mornynge  
Y wente on my playnge,  
And noon evell ne thoughte,  
The geauntes, wythout lesynge,  
Out of a kave gonne sprynge,  
And to thys fyre me brought.  
Of hem y hedde ben yschent, 670  
Ne god me socour hadde y sent,  
That all thys world wrought ;  
He yeldede thys good dede  
That for us gan blede,  
And wyth hys blod us bought.

Without ony more talkynge  
To horse they gon sprynge,  
And ryde forth all yn same ;  
He tolde the erl tydynge  
How he wan yn fyghtynge 680  
Hys chyld fram wo and schame.  
The two heddys wer ysent  
Artour the kyng to present,  
With mochell gle and game ;  
Thanne ferst yn court aros  
Lybeaus desconus los,  
And hys gentyll fame.



The erl Autore also blyve  
 Profrede hys doftyr hym to wyve,  
 Vyolette that may ;  
 And kasteles ten and fyve  
 And all after hys lyve  
 Hys lond to have for ay.  
 Than seyde Lybeaus desconois,  
 Be the love of swete Jhesus,  
 Naught wyve yet y ne may ;  
 I have for to wende  
 Wyth thys mayde so hende,  
 And therefore have good dav.

The erl, for hys good dede, 700  
Yaf hym ryche wede,  
Scheld and armes brycht ;  
And also a noble stede,  
That doughty was of dede,  
In batayle and yn fyght.  
They ryde forth all thre  
Toward the fayre cytè,  
Kardevyle for soth hyt hyght ;  
Thanne sawe they yn a park  
A castell stout and stark, 710  
That ryally was adyght.

Swych saw they never non,  
Imade of lyme and ston,  
Ikarneled all abowte ;  
Oo, seyde Lybeaus, be seynt Jon,  
Her wer a wordly won  
For man that wer yn dowte.  
Tho logh that mayde bryght,  
And seyde hyt owyth a knyght  
The beste her abowte ;  
Ho that wyll wyth hym fyght,  
Be hyt be day other nyght,  
He doth hym lowe lowte.

For love of hys lemman,  
That ys so fayr a woman,  
He hath do crye and grede ;

Ho that bryngeth a fayr yron,  
 A jersfaukon whyt as swan  
 He schall have to mede.  
 Yef sche ys naght so bryght,  
 Wyth Gyffroun he mot fyght,  
 And ye may not spede ;  
 Hys hed schall of be raft,  
 And sette upon a sper schaft,  
 To se yn lengthe and brede.

730

And that thou mayst se full well  
 Ther stant yn ech a karnell  
 An hed other two upryght ;  
 Than seyde Lybeaus also snell,  
 Be god and seynt Mychell,  
 Wyth Gyffroun y schall fyght ;  
 And chalaunge the jersfawncoun,  
 And sey that y have yn this toun,  
 A lemman to so bryght ;  
 And yef he her wyll se,  
 I wyll hym schewy the,  
 Be day other be nyght.

740

The dwerk seyde, Be Jhesus,  
 Gentyll Lybeaus desconus,  
 That wer a greet peryle,  
 Syr Gyffroun le flowdous  
 In fyghtyng he hath an us  
 Knyghtes to begyle.  
 Lybeaus answerede thar  
 Therof have thou no kar ;  
 Be god and be seynt Gyle,  
 I woll ysè hys face  
 Er y westward pace  
 From thys cyté a myle.

750

Wythoute a more resoun  
 They tok har [yn] the toun,  
 And dwellede styll yn pese ;  
 A morn Lybeaus was boun  
 For to wyne renoun,  
 And ros, wythoute les :

760

And armede hym full sure.  
 In that selve armure  
     That erl Autores was ;  
 Hys stede he began stryde,  
 The dwerk rod hym besyde, 770  
     Toward that prowde palys.

Syr Gyffroun le fludous  
 Aros as was hys uus,  
     In the morn-tyde ;  
 And whan he com out of hys hous,  
 He saw Lybeaus desconus  
     Com prykynde as pryns yn pryde,  
 Wythoute a more abood  
 And ayens hym he rod,  
     And thus to hym he cryde, 780  
 Wyth voys that was schrylle ; \*  
 Comyst thou for good, other for ylle ?  
     Tell me, and naght me hyde.

Than seyde Lybeaus al so tyte,  
 For y have greet delyte  
     Wyth the for to fyght ;  
 For thou seyst greet despyte  
 That woman half so whyt,  
     As thy lemman be ne myght ;  
 And y have on yn tounce, 790  
 Fayr of fassyounce,  
     In clothes whan sche ys dyght ;  
 Therfore thy gerfawcoun  
 To Artour the kyng wyth kroun  
     Bryng y schall wyth ryght.

Than seyde Gyffroun, Gentyll knyght,  
 How scholl we preve thys syght,  
     Whych of hem fayrer be ?  
 Lybeaus answerede aplyght,  
 In Cardevyle cyté ryght, 800  
     Ther ech man may hem se :

---

\* Original reading : *schylle*.

And bothe they schull be sette  
 A myddes the market,  
 To loke on bothe bond and fre ;  
 Yf my lemman ys broun,  
 To wynne the gerfawcoun  
 Fyghte y wyll wyth the.

Than seyde Gyffroun, al so snell,  
 To all thys y graunte well,  
 Thys day at underne-tyde ;  
 Be god and be seynt Mychell,  
 Out of thys castell

810

To Karlof i schall ryde.  
 Har gloves up they held,  
 In forward as y teld,  
 As princes prowde yn pryde ;  
 Syr Lybeaus al so snell  
 Rod hom to hys castell,  
 No lenger \* he nolde abyde ;

And commande mayde Elene,  
 As semelekest on to sene,

820

Buske her and make her boun :  
 " I say, be hevene quene,  
 Gyffrouns lemman schene

This day schall come to toun :  
 And bothe men you schall ysè,  
 A mydward the cytè,

Both body and fasoun ;  
 Yef thou be naght so bryght,  
 Wyth Gyffroun i mot fyght,  
 To wynne the Gerfaucoun."

830

Mayde Elene al so tyte,  
 In a robe of samyte  
 Anoon sche gan her tyre,  
 To tho Lybeaus profyte  
 In kevechers whyt,  
 Arayde wyth gold wyre.

\* Original reading : *leng*.

A velvwet mantyll gay,  
Pelvred wyth grys and gray,  
    Sche caste abowte her swyre, 840  
A sercle upon her molde,  
Of stones and of golde,  
    The best yn that enpyre.

Upon a pomely palfray  
Lybeaus sette that may,  
    And ryden forth all thre ;  
Thanne ech man gan to say,  
Her cometh a lady gay,  
And semelych on to se.  
Into the market sche rode, 850  
And hovede and abode,  
    A mydward the cytè ;  
Than sygh they Gyffroun come ryde,  
And two squyeres be hys syde,  
    Wythout a more mayné.

He bar the scheld of goules,  
Of sylver thre whyte oules,  
    Of gold was the bordure,  
Of the selve colours,  
And of non other flowres, 860  
    Was lyngell and trappure.  
Hys squyer gan lede  
Before hym upon a stede  
    Thre schaftes good and sure ;  
That other bar redy boun  
The whyte gerfawcoun,  
    That leyd was to wajour.

After hym com ryde  
A lady proud yn pryde,  
    Was clodeth yn purpel palle ; 870  
That folk com fer and wyde  
To se her bak and syde,  
    How gentyll sche was and small.  
Her mantyll was rosyne,  
Pelvred with ermyne,  
    Well ryche and reall ;

A sercle upon her molde,  
Of stones and of golde,  
Wyth many a juall.

As the rose her robe was red, 880  
The her schon on hyr heed,  
As gold wyre schyneth bryght ;  
Ayder browe as selken threde,  
Abowte yn lengthe and yn brede,  
Hyr nose was strath and ryght.  
Her cyen gray as glas,  
Melk-whyt was her \* face,  
So seyde that her sygh wyth syght ;  
Her swere long and small, 890  
Her beawte telle all  
No man wyth mouth ne myght.

Togedere men gon hem bryng  
A mydward the chepyng,  
Har beawte to dyscrye ;  
They seyde, olde and yenge,  
For soth wythoute lesyng,  
Betwene hem was partye.  
Gyffrouns lemman ys clerc  
As ys the rose yn erbere,  
For soth and naght to lye ; 900  
And Elenc, the messengere,  
Semeth but a lavendere  
Of her norserye.

Than seyde Gyffroun le fludous,  
Syr Lybeaus desconus,  
Thys hauk thou hast forlore ;  
Than seyde Lybeaus desconus,  
Nay swych nas never myn uus,  
Justy y well therfore.  
And yef thou berest me doun, 910  
Tak my heed the fawkoun,  
As forward was before ;

And yf y bere doun the,  
 The hauk schall wende wyth me,  
     Maugre thyn heed hore :  
 What help mo tales told?  
 They ryden yn to the feld,  
     And wyth ham greet partye ;  
 Wyth coronals stef and stelde,  
 Eyther smyt other in the schelde, 920  
     Wyth greet envye.  
 Har saftes breke asonder,  
 Har dentes ferthe as thonder,  
     That cometh out of the skye ;  
 Taborus and trompours,  
 Herawdes goode discoverours,\*  
     Har strokes gon descrye.

Syr Gyffroun gan to speke,  
 Breng a schaft that nell naght breke,  
     A schaft wyth a cornall ; 930  
 Thys yonge ferly frek  
 Ys yn hys sadell steke,  
     As stone yn castell wall.  
 Thaughe he wer whyght werroure,  
 As Alysander, other Artour,  
     Launcelot, other Percevale,  
 I wyll do hym stoupe  
 Over hys horses croupe,  
     And yeve hym evele fall.

The knyghtes bothe two, 940  
 Togydere they ryden tho,  
     With well greet raundoun ;  
 Lybeaus smot Gyffroun so,  
 That hys scheld fell hym fro,  
     In that feld adoun.  
 The lough all that ther wes,  
 And seyde wythoute les,  
     Duke, erl, and baroun,  
 That yet never they ne seygh  
 Man that myghte dreygh 950  
     To justy wyth Gyffroun.

---

\* Original reading : *discoverous*.

Gyffroun hys hors outryt,  
 And was wode out of wyt,  
     For he myghte naight spede ;  
 He rod agayn as tyd,  
 And Lybeaus so he smyt,  
     As man that wold awede.  
 But Lybeaus sat so faste,  
 That Gyffroun doun he caste,  
     Bothe hym and hys stede ; 960  
 Gyffrounys legge \* to-brak,  
 That men herde the krak,  
     Aboute yn lengthe and brede.

Tho seyde all tho that ther wore,  
 That Gyffroun hadde forlore,  
     The whyte gerfawkoun ;  
 To Lybeaus thay hym bore,  
 And wente, lasse and more,  
     Wyth hym ynto the tounc.  
 Syr Gyffroun, upon hys scheld, 970  
 Was ybore hom fram the feld,  
     Wyth care and rufull roun ;  
 The gerfawkoun ysent was,  
 Be a knyght that hyght Gludas,  
     To Artour kyng wyth kroun.

And wryten all the dede  
 Wyth hym he gan lede,  
     The hauk how that he wan ;  
 Tho Artour herde hyt rede,  
 To hys knyghtes he seyde, 980  
     Lybeaus well werry-kan.  
 He hath me sent the valour  
 Of noble dedes four  
     Sethe he ferst began ;  
 Now wyll y sende hym tresour,  
 To spendy wyth honour,  
     As falleth for swych a man.

And hundred pound honest  
 Of floryns wyth the best  
     He sente to Cardelof than ; 990

---

\* Original reading : *regge*.



Tho Lybeaus helde hys feste,  
 That fourty dayes leste,  
 Of lordes of renoun.  
 Than Lybeaus and that may  
 Token hyr ryghte way  
 Toward Synadowne.  
 And fayre her leve token thay,  
 To wende ynto another contray,  
 Of duk, erl and baroun ;  
 As they ryden an a lowe, 1000  
 Hornes herde they blowe,  
 Ther unther the doune ;

And houndes ronne greet and smale,  
 Hontes grette yn the vale  
 The dwerke seyde that drowe  
 For to telle soth my tale,  
 Fele yeres ferely fale  
 That horn well y thede knowe.  
 Hym blowyth syr Otes de Lyle,  
 That servede my lady som whyle, 1010  
 In her semyly sale,  
 Whanne he was take wyth gyle  
 He flawe for greet peryle  
 West ynto Wyrhale.

As they ryde talkyng  
 A rach ther come flyngyng  
 Overtwert the way,  
 Thanne seyde old and yynge,\*  
 From her ferst gynnyng,  
 They ne sawe hond never so gay. 1020  
 He was of all colours  
 That man may se of flours,  
 Betwene Mydsomer and May ;  
 That mayde sayde al so snell,  
 Ne saw y never no juell  
 So lykyng to my pay :

---

\* Original reading : *ynge*.

God wold that y hym aughte !  
 Lybeaus anoon hym kaghte,  
     And yaf hym to mayde Elene ;  
 They ryden forth all yn saght, 1030  
 And tolde how knyghtes faght,  
     For ladyes bryght and schene.  
 Ne hadde they ryde but a whyle,  
 The mountance of a myle,  
     In that forest grene,  
 They sawe an hynde com styke,  
 And two grehoundes ylyke,  
     Be that rech that y er of mene.

They hovede unther a lynde,  
 To se the cours of the hynde, 1040  
     Lybeaus and hys fere ;  
 Thanne seygh they come byhynde  
 A knyght iclodeth yn\* Ynde,  
     Upon a bay destrere.  
 Hys bugle he gan to blowe,  
 For hys folk hyt schuld knowe  
     In what stede he wer ;  
 He seyde to hem that throwe,  
 Syr, that rach was myn owe,  
     Ygon for sevene yere : 1050

Frendes, leteth hym go.  
 Lybeaus answerede tho,  
     That schall never betyde,  
 For wyth myn handes two  
 I hym yaf that mayde me fro  
     That hoveth me besyde.  
 Tho seyde ser Otes de Lyle,  
 Than artow yn peryle,  
     Byker yef thou abyde.  
 Tho seyde Lybeaus, Be seynt Gyle, 1060  
 I ne yeve naght of thy gyle,  
     Cherll, though thou chyde.

Then seyde syr Otes de Lyle,  
Syr, thyn wordes beth fyle,  
    Cherll was never my name ;  
My fader an erll was whyle,  
The countesse of Karlyle  
    Certes was my dame.  
Wer ych yarmed now,  
Redy as art thou, 1070  
    We wolde feyghte yn same ;  
But thou the rach me leve,  
Thou pleyyst, er hyt be eve,  
    A wonder wylde game.

Tho seyde Lybeaus also prest,  
Therof tho thy best,  
    Thys rach schall wyth me wende.  
They tok har way ryght west,  
In that wylde forest,  
    Ryght as the dwerk hem kende. 1080  
The lord wyth greet errour  
Rod hom to hys tour,  
    And after hys frendes sende,  
And tolde hem anon ryghtes  
That on of Artourys knyghtes  
    Schamelych gan hym schende ;

And hadde hys rach ynome.  
Thanne seyde alle and some,  
    The traytour schall be take,  
And never ayen hom come, 1090  
    Thaugh he wer thoghtyer gome,  
    Than Launcelet du Lake.  
Tho dyghte they hem all to armes,  
Wyth swerdes and wyth gysarmes,  
    As werre schold awake ;  
Knytes and squyeres,  
Lepte on her destrerys,  
    For har lordes sake.

Upon an hell well hyghe  
Lybeaus ther they syghe, 1100  
    He rod pas be pas ;

To hym they gon crye,  
Traytour, thou schalt dye,  
For thy wykkede trespas.  
Syr Lybeaus ayen beheld  
How fulfelde was the feld,  
So greet peple ther was ;  
He seyde, Mayde Elene,  
For our rach, y wene,  
Us cometh a karfull cas.

1110

I rede that ye drawe  
Into the wode schawe,  
Your heddes for to hyde ;  
For I am swyde fawe,  
Thaugh ych schulde be slawe,  
Bykere of hem y woll abyde.  
Into the wode they rode,  
And Lybeaus theroute abothe,  
As aunterous knyght yn pryde ;  
Wyth bowe, and wyth arblaste,  
To hym they schote faste,  
And made hym woundes wyde.

1120

Lybeaus stede ran,  
And bar doun hors and man,  
For nothyng nolde he \* spare ;  
That peple seyde than,  
Thys ys fend Satan,  
That mankende wyll forfare.  
For wham Lybeaus arafte  
After hys ferste drawghte  
He slep for evermare :  
But sone he was besette  
As theer ys yn a nette  
Wyth grymly wondes sare.

1130

Twelf knyghtes all prest  
He saw come yn the forest,  
In armes cler and bryght ;

---

\* Original reading : *her*.

Al day they hadde yrest,  
 And thought\* yn that forest,  
     To sle Lybeaus the knyght. 1140  
 Of sute were all twelfe,  
 That on was the lord hymselfe,  
     In ryme to rede aryght ;  
 They smyte to hym all at ones,  
 And thoghte to breke hys bones,  
     And felle hym down yn fyght.

Tho myghte men her dyngre,  
 And swordes lowde ryngre,  
     Among hem all yn fere ;  
 So harde they gonne thryngre, 1150  
 The sparkes gonne out sprynge,  
     Fram scheld and helmes clere.  
 Lybeaus slough of hem thre,  
 And the fourth gonne to fle,  
     And thorst naght nyghhe hym nere,  
 The lord dwellede yn that schour,  
 And hys sones four,  
     To selle har lyves there.

Ther rounce tho rappes ryve,  
 He ayens hem fyve, 1160  
     Faught as he were wod ;  
 Neygh down they gonne hym dryve,  
 As water doth of clyve,  
     Of hym ran the blode.  
 As he was neygh yspylyt,  
 Hys swerd brast yn the hylt,  
     Tho was he mad of mode ;  
 The lord a strok hym sette,  
 Through † helm and basnette,  
     That yn the scheld hyt stode. 1170

Aswogh he fell adoun,  
 And hys hynder arsoun,  
     As man that was mate ;

\* Original reading : *though*.

† Original reading : *though*.

Hys fomen were well boun,  
 To perce hys acketoun,  
 Gypell, mayl, and plate.  
 As he gan sore smerte,  
 Up he pullede hys herte,  
 And keverede of hys state;  
 An *ex* he hente all boun,  
 At hys hynder arsoun,  
 Allmest hym thoughte to late.

1180

Than bestered he hym as a knygh,  
 Thre stedes heoddes doun ryght,  
 He smot at strokes thre;  
 The lord saw that syght,  
 And on hys courser lyght,  
 Awey he gan to fle,  
 Lybeaus no lenger abode,  
 But aftyr hym he rode,  
 And unther a chesteyn tre,  
 Ther he hadde hym quelthe,  
 But the lord hym yelde,  
 At hys wyll to be.

1190

And be sertayne extente  
 Tresour, lond, and rente,  
 Castell, halle, and bour,  
 Lybeaus therto consente  
 In forward \* that he wente  
 To the kyng Artour,  
 And seye, Lord of renoun,  
 As overcome and prysoun  
 Y am to thyn honour.  
 The lord graunted to hys wyll  
 Bothe lowthe and styll,  
 And ledde hym to hys bour.

1200

Anoon that mayde Elene,  
 Wyth gentyll men fyftene  
 Was fet to that castell

---

† Original reading: *soward*.

Sche and the dwerke bydene 1210  
Tolde dedes kene

Of Lybeaus how hyt fell.  
Swyche presentes four  
He hadde ysent kyng Artour,  
That he wan fayr and well ;  
The lord was glad and blythe,  
And thonketh fele syde  
God and seynt Mychell.

Now reste we her awhyle  
Of syr Otes de Lyle, 1220

And telle we other tales.  
Lybeaus rod many a myle,  
Among aventurus fyle,  
In Yrland and yn Wales.  
Hyt befell yn the month of June,  
Whan the fenell hangeth yn toun,  
Grene yn semely sales,  
Thys somerys day ys long,  
Mery ys the fowles song,  
As \* notes of the nyghtyngales. 1230

That tyme Lybeaus com ryde,  
Be a ryver syde,  
And saw a greet cytè,  
Wyth palys prowde yn pryde,  
And castelles heygh and wyde,  
Wyth gates greet plentè.  
He axede what hyt hyght.  
The mayde seyde anon ryght,  
Syr, y telle hyt the,  
Men clepeth hyt Yledor,† 1240  
Her hath be fyghtynge more  
Thanne owher yn any countrè.

For a lady of prys,  
Wyth rode rede as rose on ryse,  
Thys countre ys yn dowte ;

---

\* Original reading: *A*.

† *L'isle d'or*, the Isle of Gold, or Golden Island ; but whether designed for French or English seems rather doubtful.

A geaunt hatte Maugys,  
 Nowher hys per ther nys,  
     Her hathe be leyde abowte.  
 He ys blak as ony psych.  
 Nower ther ys non swych,  
     Of dede sterne and stoute ;  
 Ho that passeth the bregge  
 Hys armes he mot legge,  
     And to the geaunt alowte.

1250

Tho seyde Lybeaus, Mayde hende,  
 Schold y wonde to wende,  
     For hys dentys ille ;  
 Yf god me grace sende,  
 Er thys day come to ende,  
     Wyth fyght y schall hym spylle.  
 I have yscyn grete okes  
 Falle for wyndes strokes,  
     The smale han stonde styll ;  
 They y be yyng and lyte,  
 To hym yyt wyll y smyte  
     Do god all hys wylle.

1260

They ryden forth all thre  
 Toward that fayre cytè,  
     Me clepeth hyt Ylledore ;  
 Maugeys they gonne ysè  
 Upon the bregge of tre,  
     Bold as wylde bore.  
 Hys scheld as blakke as psych,  
 Lyngell armes trappur was swych,  
     Thre mammettes therynne wore,  
 Of gold gaylyth ygeld,  
 A schafte an honde he held,  
     And oo scheld hym before.

1270

He cryde to hym yn despyte,  
 Say, thou felaw yn whyt,  
     Tell me what art thou,  
 Torne hom agayn all so tyt,  
 For thy owene profyt,  
     Yef thou lovede thy prow.

1280



Lybeaus seyde anoon ryght,  
 Artour made me knyght,  
     To hym i made a vow,  
 That y ne schulde never turne bak,  
 Therfore, thou devell yn blak,  
     Make the redy now.

1290

Syr Lybeaus and Maugys,  
 On stedes prowde of prys,  
     Togedere ryde full ryght;  
 Bothe lardes and ladyes  
 Leyn out yn pomet touris\*  
     To se that sely fyght;  
 And prayde wyth good wyll,  
 Bothe lode and styl,  
     Helpe Lybeaus the knyght;  
 And that fyle geaunt,  
 That levede yn Termagaunt,†  
     That day to deye yn fyght.

1300

\* Original reading : *tours*. The poet certainly intended a rhyme, if ever so bad.

† So, afterward, in the *King of Tars* :—

“Of *Tirmagaunt* and of *Mahoun*.”

“**TERMAGAUNT**,” says Dr. Percy, “is the name given in the old romances to the god of the Saracens : in which he is constantly linked with **MAHOUND** or **Mahomet**.” (i, 76.) “This word,” he adds, “is derived by the very learned editor of Junius from the Anglo-Saxon *Tyr*, very, and *Mazan*, mighty. As this word had so sublime a derivation, and was so applicable to the true god, how shall we account for its being so degraded? Perhaps *Tyr-mazan* or *Termagant* had been a name originally given to some Saxon idol, before our ancestors were converted to christianity; or had been the peculiar attribute of one of their false deities; and therefore the first christian missionaries rejected it as profane and improper to be implied [*r. applied*] to the true god. Afterwards, when the irruptions of the Saracens into Europe, and the Crusades into the east, had brought them acquainted with a new species of unbelievers, our ignorant ancestors, who thought all that did not receive the christian law were necessarily pagans and idolaters, supposed the Mahometan creed was in all respects the same with that of their pagan forefathers, and therefore made no scruple to give the ancient name of *Termagant* to the god of the Saracens: just in the same manner as they afterwards used the name of *Sarazen* to express any kind of pagan idolater.” (77.) “I cannot,” says he, afterward, “conclude this short memoir, without observing that the French romancers, who had borrowed the word *Termagant* from us, and applied it as we in their old romances, corrupted it into **TERVAGAUNTE**. This may be added to the other proofs adduced in these volumes of the great intercourse that formerly sut-

Har scheldes brooke asonder,  
 Har dentes ferd as donder,  
 The peeces gonne out spryng ;  
 Ech man hadde wonder  
 That Lybeaus ne hadde ybe unther,  
 At the ferst gynyng.

sisted between the old minstrels and legendary writers of both nations, and that they mutually borrowed each others romances" (78.) In a note, at p. 379, he, likewise observes that "the old French romancers, who had corrupted TERMAGANT into Tervagant, couple it with the name of Mahomet as constantly as ours. As 'TERMAGANT,' he says, "is evidently of Anglo-Saxon derivation, and can only be explained from the elements of that language, its being corrupted by the old French romancers proves that they borrowed some things from ours." In another note (III., xxii), in order to support his hypothesis, that "The stories of king Arthur and his round table, of Guy and Bevis, with some others, were probably the invention of English minstrels," he has the following words: "That the French romancers borrowed some things from the English, appears from the word TERMAGANT, which they took up from our minstrels, and corrupted into Tervagaunte. . . . What is singular, Chaucer, who was most conversant with the French poets, adopts their corruption of this word.—See TYRWHITT'S EDIT."

In this pursuit the venerable prelate (though he might not be one at that time) has suffered himself to be misled by an *ignis fatuus*. All that he has said, about Tyr-Mazan, or *Termagant* being the name of a Saxon deity, remains to be proved. The learned editor of Junius imposed upon him: the combination Tyr Mazan, is not to be found even in his own Saxon dictionary, neither, according to that authority, is Tyr, very; and maza, not mazan, is mighty: and, after all, this is only in effect the *ter-magnus* of former etymologists. As little foundation is there for supposing that the French romancers not only borrowed the word *Termagant* from the English, but, likewise, corrupted it into Tervagaunte: which is contrary to every authenticated fact. The English romancers not only servilely followed the French, but even themselves corrupted the word Tervagante, after they had got it. This corruption, however, must have taken place before the time of Chaucer, who, notwithstanding what Dr. P. has asserted, even in Mr. Tyrwhitt's edition, gives the English corruption, and not the French original:—

"He sayde, Child, by TERMAGAUNT."

(II. 235; and see IV., 318.)

A much greater mistake than the present editor made, by inadvertently quoting his own book, by which the worthy doctor (forgetful of his own hallucinations) was pleased to say "all confidence [had] been destroyed."

But, in the *King of Tars*, a romance, in all probability, anterior to Chaucer's time, as preserved in the Edinburgh MS. we find—

"Be Mahoun and Tervagant: "

and had we more copies of that age, we should, doubtless, recover many other instances of the word; as, in fact, there may be in that identical MS.

With respect to the etymology of the original name Tervagante (for it is perfectly ridiculous to seek for that of the corruption *Termagant*), it may, possibly, be referred to the two Latin words *ter* and *vagans*, i.e., the action of going

Thanne drough dey swordes bothe,  
 As men that weren wrothe,  
 And gonne togedere dyng; ;  
 Lybeaus smot Maugys so,  
 That hys scheld fell hym fro,  
 And yn to the feld gan flynge.

1310

Maugys was queynte and quede,  
 And smot of the stedes heed,  
 That all fell out the brayne ;

or turning thrice round, a very ancient ceremony in magical incantation. Thus Medea, in Ovid's *Metamorphosis* (L. 7, V. 189):—

"Ter se convertit ; ter sumtis flumine crinem  
 Irroravit aquis ; ternis ululatus ora  
 Solvit."

"She turned her thrice about, as oft she threw  
 On her pale tresses the nocturnal dew,  
 Then yelling thrice, &c."

*Vago*, indeed, in pure Latin, means to wander, but, in barbarous times, the classical sense of a word was not much regarded : of this, however, one cannot be confident. Tir, or Tyr, in Saxon, and the ancient Cimbric, was the name of Odin, or some other northern deity, and, metonymically, any great leader, prince, lord, or emperor ; and is occasionally applied, in composition, to God, the Creator. See Lye's Dictionary, and Hickes's *Thesaurus*. But, admitting *Tervagante* or *Termagant* to have some connection with the Saxon or Cimbric term, it will, by no means, prove that we did not obtain the word from the French, whose language, every one knows, was as much a dialect of the ancient Cimbric as that of the Anglo-Saxon. The word *three* had some mystic signification with the ancients :—

"Tergeminamque Hecaten, tria virginis ora Dianæ." VIR. Æ. IV.

*Termagant*, therefore, has been corrupted, by the English, from *Tervagant*, precisely in the same manner as we have corrupted *cormorant* from *corvorant*, and *malmsey* from *malvesie*. The Italian poets have it *Trivigante*. Thus Ariosto :—

"Bestemmiando Macone, e Trivigante."

It, likewise, occurs in the *Gierusalemme liberata* of Tasso. They, too, doubtless, were indebted for it to the French.

\*\* King Herod, in the Coventry *Corpus Christi* play, constantly swears by Mahomet, but never by *Termagant*. So in fo. 173 :

"Now be Mahound, my god of grace."

One of the soldiers, who are set to watch the sepulchre, calls him "Seynt Mahownde."

"Tervagant, l'un des dieux prétendus des Mahométans," is a character in "*Le jeu de S. Nicolas*," a very ancient French mystery (see *Fabliaux ou contes*, II., 131) ; but no such personage, or even name, occurs in any English mystery or morality now extant, or of which we have any account ; though, from the following passage, in Bale's *Acts of English Votaries*, it would seem that some such character had, in his time, been known to the stage :—

"Grennyng upon her, lyke *Termagautes* in a play."

The stede fell doune deed,  
 Lybeaus nothyng ne sede,  
     Bot start hym up agayn. 1320  
 An ax he hente boun,  
 That heng at hys arsoun,  
     And smot a strok of mayn;  
 Thorugh Maugys stedes swyre,  
 And forkarf bon and lyre,  
     That heed fell yn the playn.

Afote they gonne to fyghte,  
 As men that wer of myghte,  
     The strokes betwene hem two  
 Descryve no man ne myghte, 1330  
 For they wer unsyght,  
     And cyder othres fo.  
 Fram the our of pryme\*  
 Tyll hyt was evensong tyme  
     To fyghte they wer well thro;  
 Syr Lybeaus durstede sore,  
 And seyde Maugys thyn ore,†  
     To drynke lette me go:

---

\* It was customary with the Christian kings, knights, and soldiers, to cease fighting at evensong or vespers, observed at six o'clock. Thus, in the ancient Catalan romance of *Tirant lo Blanch*, Barcelona, 1497, folio, it is said, "*E continuant tostemps la batailla era ja quasi hora de vespres, &c.*" So, likewise, in the *Histoire de Guerin de Montglave*, Lyons, 1585, 8vo, "*Et maintint la guerre jusques à l'heure de vespres.*" In the old Ballad of *The Hunts of Cheviat* :—

"When even-song bell was rang, the battell was nat half done ;"  
 and it became sinful, of course, to fight any longer. The same circumstance is thus noticed in the more modern ballad of *Chevy-Chase* :—

"The fight did last, from break of day,  
 Till setting of the sun ;  
 For, when they rung the evening-bell,  
 The battle scarce was done."

Dr. Percy has confounded the *vesper bell* with the *curfew*. The reason of this temporary cessation of bloodshed, proceeded from respect to the Virgin Mary ; for, at this hour, the angelical salutation was sung ; whence it was sometimes called the *Ave Maria* bell. It is still customary, upon the Spanish stage, for the actors, in the midst of the grossest and most indecent buffoonery, to fall down on their knees, and pull out their beads, at the sound of this bell.

† Thus, in Chaucer's *Millere's Tale*, V. 3724 :

"Lemman, thy grace, and, swete bird, thyn ore."

In the learned editor's note on this passage he explains *ore* to signify "*grace*,

And y schall graunte the  
 What bone thou bydest me, 1340  
 Swych cas yef that be tyt;  
 Greet schame hyt wold be  
 For durste a knyght to sle,  
 And no mare profyt.  
 Maugys grauntede hys wyll,  
 To drynke all hys fyll,  
 Wythout any despyte;  
 As Lybeaus ley on the bank,  
 And thorough hes helm he drank,  
 Maugys a strok hym smyt. 1350

That yn the ryuer he fell,  
 Hys armes echadell,  
 Was weet and evell adyght;  
 But up he start snell,  
 And seyde, Be seynt Mychell,  
 Now am y two so lyght.  
 What wendest thou, fendes fere?  
 Uncrystenede that were  
 Tyll y saw the wyth syght;  
 I schall for thys baptyse 1360  
 Ryght well quyte thy servyse,  
 Thorough grace of god almight.

---

*favour, protection:*" and cites, as 'an additional instance, in support of that explanation, the present text, "where," he says, "*thyne ore* must be understood to mean *with thy favour*, as in this passage of Chaucer."

The same phrase occurs frequently in *Syr Bevis*, though not precisely, at least, in every instance, with Mr. Tyrwhitt's signification:—

"She saide, Bevis, lemman, *thyn ore*,  
 Thou art wounded wonder sore."  
 "Mercy, saide Bradmodde, *thyn ore*."  
 "There is no man, by goddys *ore*."  
 "Then sayd Bevis, for Crystes *ore*."

Thus, likewise, Robert of Gloucester, P. 39:—

"The maister fel adoun on kne, and criede *mercy and ore*."

Again:—

"Therefore the erl of Kent he bysought *nilc and ore*."

Again, in *The erl of Toulous*, V. 583:—

"Y aske *mercy* for goddys *ore*."

Thanne newe fyght they began,  
Eyther tyll other ran,

And delede dentes strong ;  
Many a gentylman,  
And ladyes whyt as swan,

For Lybeaus handes wrong.  
For Maugys yn the feld  
Forkarf Lybeaus scheld,

1370

Wyth dente of armes long ;  
Thanne Lybeaus ran away,  
Ther that Maugys scheld lay,  
And up he gan hyt fonge.

And ran agayn to hym  
Wyth strokes stout and grym,  
Togydere they gonne asayle,  
Besyde that ryver brym  
Tyll hyt darkede dym

1380

Betwene hem was batayle.  
Lybeaus was werroure wyght,  
And smot a strok of myght,  
Thorugh gypell, plate, and mayll ;  
Forthwyth the scholder bon  
Maugys arm fyll of anoon,  
Into the feld saunz fayle.

The geaunt thys gan se  
Islawe that he schulde be,  
And flaugh wyth myght and mayn.

Lybeaus after gan fle,

1390

Wyth sterne strokes thre,  
And smot hys back atweyn.

The geaunt ther beleveth  
Lybeaus smot of hys heved,  
And of the batayle was fayn.

He wente ynto the toun

Wyth fayr processioune,

That folk com hym agayn.

A lady, whyt as flowr,  
That hyghte *la dame d'amore*,  
A feng hym fayr and well ;

1400

And thankede hys honour,  
 That he was her socour,  
     Ayens the geaunt so fell.  
 To chambre sche gan hym lede,  
 And dede of all hys wede,  
     And clodede hym yn pell ;  
 And proferede hym wyth word  
 For to be her lord,  
     In cyté and castell. 1410

Lybeaus grauntede yn haste,  
 And love to her he caste,  
     For sche was bryght and schene ;  
 Alas he ne hadde ybe chast !  
 For afterward at last,  
     Sche dede hym greet tene.  
 For twelf monthe and more  
 Lybeaus dwellede thore,  
     And mayde Elene ;  
 That never he myghte out-breke, 1420  
 For to help a wreke  
     Of Synadowne the quene.

For thys fayr lady\*  
 Kowthe moch of sorcery,  
     More then other wycches fyfe ;  
 Sche made hym melodye,  
 Of all manere menstracy,  
     That man myghte descryve.  
 Whan he seygh her face,  
 Hym thought he was 1430  
     In Paradys alyve ;  
 Wyth fantasme, and fayrye,  
 Thus sche blerede hys yye,  
     That evell mot sche thryve.

Tyll hyt fell on a day,  
 He mette Elene that may,  
     Wythinne the castell tour ;

---

\* This lady bears a strong resemblance to the no less magical than beautiful fairies, the Calypso of Homer, and the Alcina of Ariosto ; both of whom deluded and detained Ulysses and Rogero in the manner *la dame d'amour* here treats Lybeaus.

To hym sche gan to say,  
Syr knyght, thou art fals of fay,  
    Ayens the king Artour. 1440  
For love of a woman,  
That of sorcery kan,  
    Thou doost greet dyshonour ;  
The lady of Synadowne  
Longe lyght in prisoun,  
    And that is greet dolour.

Lybeaus herd her so speke,  
Hym thought hys hert wold breke,  
    For sorow and for schame ;  
And at a posterne unsteke 1450  
Lybeaus gan out-breke  
    Fram that gentyll dame ;  
And tok wyth hym hys stede,  
Hys scheld, and hys ryche wede,  
    And ryde forth all ysame ;  
Her styward stout and sterne,  
He made hys squyere,  
    Gyfflet was hys name :

And ryde, as fast as they may,  
Forth yn her jornay, 1460  
    On stedes bay and browne ;  
Upon the thyrdde thay  
They saw a cyté gay,  
    Me clepeth hyt Synadowne.  
Wyth castell heygh and wyde,  
And palys prowd yn pryde,  
    Werk of fayr fassoune ;  
But Lybeaus desconus  
He hadde wonder of an uus  
    That he saw do yn tounce. 1470

For gore, and fen, and full wast,  
That was out ykast,  
    Togydere they gaderede y wys ;  
Lybeaus axede yn hast,  
Tell me, mayde chast,  
    What amounteth thys.



They taketh all that hore,  
That er was out ybore,  
    Me thyngeth they don a mys.  
Thanne seyde mayde Elene, 1480  
Syr, wythouten wene,  
    I schalle the telle how yt ys.

No knyght for nessche ne hard,  
They he schold be forfard,  
    Ne geteth her non ostell,  
For love of a styward,  
Men clepeth hym syr Lambard,  
    Constable of thys castell.  
Ryde to that est gate,  
And axede thyn in therate, 1490  
    Bothe fayre and well ;  
And er he bete thy nede,  
Justes he wyll the bede,  
    By god and seynt Mychell.

And yf he beryth the doun,  
Hys trompys schull be boun,  
    Har bemes for to blowe ;  
And thoroughout Synadowne,  
Bothe maydenes, and garssoun,  
    Fowyll fen schull on the throwe : 1500  
And thanne to thy lyves ende,  
In whett stede that thou wende,  
    For coward werst thou knowe,  
And thus may kyng Artour  
Lese hys honour,  
    Thorough thy dede slowe.

Than seyde Lybeaus al so tyt,  
That wer a greet dyspyt,  
    For any man alyve ;  
To tho Artour profyt, 1510  
And make the lady quyt,  
    To hym y wyll dryve.  
Syr Gyfflette, make the yare !—  
Thyder we wylllyth fare,  
    Hastely and blyve.

They ryde thy ryght gate,  
Even to the castell-yate,  
Wyth fayre schaftes fyfe.

And at the fayr castell  
They axede her ostell, 1520  
For aunterous knyghtes ;  
The porter, fayre and well,  
Lette ham yn al so snell,  
And axede anon ryghtes :  
Ho ys yowre governowre ?  
They seyde, Kyng Artour,  
That ys man most of myghtes ;  
And welle of curtesye,  
And flouwr of chyvalrye,  
To felle hys son yn fyghtes. 1530

The porter profytable,  
To hys lord the constable  
Thus hys tale tolde,  
And wythoute fable,  
Syr, of the rownde table  
Beth come knyghtes bolde ;  
That beth armed sure,  
In rose-reed armure,  
Wyth thre lyouns of gold ;  
Lambard therof was fayn, 1540  
And swore oth certayn.  
Wyth hem juste he wolde.

And bad hem make yare,  
Into the feld to fare,  
Wythoute the castell gate ;  
The porter nold naght spare,  
As grehound doth the hare,  
To ham he ran full wate  
And seyde anon ryghtes,  
Ye aunterous knyghtes, 1550  
For nothyng ye ne late ;  
Loketh your scheldes be strong,  
Your schaftes good and long,  
Your saket and faunplate.

And rydeth ynto the feld,  
My lord, wyth sper and scheld,

Cometh wyth yow to play.  
Lybeaus spak wordes bold,  
That ys a tale ytold,

Well lykyng unto my pay. 1560  
Into the felde they ryde,  
And hovede and abyde,

As best broght to bay ;  
The lord of sente hys stede,  
Hys scheld, hys ryche wede,  
Hys atyre was stout and gay.

Hys scheld was of gold fyn,  
The bores heddes therinne,

As blak as brond ybrent ;  
The bordur of ermyne, 1570  
Nas non so queynte of gyn,

From Karlell ynto Kent.  
And of the same paynture  
Was lyngell and trappure  
Iwroght well fayre and gent ;  
Hys schaft was strong wythall,  
Theron a stef coronall,  
To dely doghty dent.

And whane that stout styward,  
That hyghte syr Lambard, 1580

Was armede at all ryghtes,  
He rood to the feld ward,  
Lyght as a lybard,

Ther hym abyde the knyghtes.  
He smote his schaft yn grate,  
Almost hym thought\* to late,

Whanne he seygh hem wyth syghte ;  
Lybeaus rood to hym thare,  
Wyth a schaft all square,  
As man most of myghte. 1590

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\* Original reading : *Through*.

Eyther smot other yn the scheld,  
The peces fell ynto the feld,  
    Of her schaftes schene ;  
All tho that hyt beheld,  
Ech man to other teld,  
    The yonge knyghte ys kene.  
Lambard was aschamed sore,  
So nas he never yn feld before,  
    To wyte and naght to wene ;  
He cryde, Do come a stranger schaft,  
Yyf Artours knyght kan craft,  
    Now hyt schall be sene.

1600

Tho he tok a schaft rounde,  
Wyth cornall sharp ygrounde,  
    And ryde be ryght resoun ;  
Ayder provede yn that stounde  
To yeve other dedys wounde,  
    Wyth fell herte as lyoun.  
Lambard smot Lybeaus so  
That hys scheld fell hym fro,  
    Into the feld adoun ;  
So harde he hym hytte,  
Unnethe that he myghte sytte  
Upryght yn hys arsoun.

1610

Hys schaft brak wyth gret power,  
Lybeaus hytte Lambard yn the launcer  
    Of hys helm so bryght ;  
That pysane, aventayle, and gorgere,  
Fell ynto the felld fer,  
    And syr Lambard upryght  
Sat, and rokkede yn hys sadell,  
As chyld doth yn a kradell,  
    Wythoute mannys myght ;  
Ech man tok other be the hod,  
And gonne for to heryc good  
    Borgays, baroun, and knyght.

1620

Ayen to ryde Lambard thought,  
Another helm hym was brought,  
    And a schaft unmete ;

Whan they togydere mette, 1630  
Ayder yn other scheld hytte,  
    Strokes grymly greete.  
Syr Lambardys schaft to-brast,  
And syr Lybeaus sat so faste  
    In sadelys as they setten,  
That the styward, syr Lambard,  
Fell of hys stede bakward,  
    So harde they two metten.

Syr Lambard was aschamed sore,  
Than seyde Lybeaus, Wyltow more? 1640  
    And he answerede, Nay ;  
Never seythe y was ybore,  
Ne sygh ycome her before  
    So redy a knyght to my pay.  
A thoghth y have myn herte wythinne,  
That thou art com of Gawenys kynne,  
    That ys so stout and gay ;  
Yef thou schalt for my lady fyght,  
Well come to me, syr, thou knyght,  
    In love and sykyr fay. 1650

Lybeaus answerede sykyrly,  
Feyghte y schall for a lady,  
    Be heste of kyng Artour ;  
But y not wherfore ne why,  
Ne who her doth swych vylany,  
    Ne what ys her dolour.  
A mayde, that ys her messengere,  
And a dwerke me brought her,  
    Her to do socour ;  
The constable seyde, Well founde 1660  
Noble knyght of the table rounde,  
    Iblessed be seynt Saviour.

Anon that mayde Elene  
Was fette wyth knyghtes ten,  
    Before syr Lambard ;

Sche and the dwerk y mene  
Tolde seven dedes kene,

That he dede dydyrward ;  
And how that syr Lybeaus  
Faught wyth fele schrewys,

1670

And for no deth ne spared ;  
Lambard was glad and blythe,  
And thonkede fele syde,  
God and seynt Edward.

Anon, wyth mylde chere,  
They sete to the sopere,

Wyth moch gle and game ;  
Lambard and Lybeaus, yn fere,  
Of aventurs that ther wer,  
Talkede bothe yn same.  
Than seyde Lybeaus, syr Constable,  
Tell me wythout fable,

1680

What ys the knyghtes name,  
That halt so yn prisoun  
The lady of Synadowne,  
That ys so gentyll a dame.

“ Nay, syr, knyght ys he non,  
Be god and be seynt Jon,

That dorst away her lede ;  
Two clerkes beth her fon,  
Well fals of flessch and bon,  
That haveth ydo thys dede.

1690

Hyt beth men of maystrye,  
Clerkes of nygremansye,  
Hare artes for to rede ;  
Syr Maboun hatte that other,  
And syr Irayn hys brother,  
For wham we beth yn drede.

Thys Yrayn and Maboun  
Have imade of our toun

1700

A palys queynte of gynne ;  
Ther nys knyght ne baroun,  
Wyth herte harde as lyoun,  
That thorste come therinne.

Thys\* ys be nygremauncye,  
Ymaketh of fayrye,  
    No man may hyt wyne ;  
Therinne ys yn prysoun,  
The lady of Synadowne,  
    Ys come of knyghtes kynne.

1710

Ofte we hereth hyr crye,  
But her to se wyth eye  
    Therto have we no myghte ;  
They doth her turmentrye,  
And all vylanye,  
    Be dayes and be nyght.  
Thys Maboun and Irayn  
Haveth swor deth certayn,  
    To dethe they wyll her dyghte ;  
But sche graunte hym tylle  
    To do Mabounnys wyll,  
    And yeve hem all her ryght.

1720

Of alle thys dukdom feyr  
That ylke ladyys eyr ;  
    And come of knyghtes kenne ;  
Sche ys meke and boneyre,  
Therefore we beth in despeyre,  
    That sche be dyght to synne.  
Than seyde Lybeaus desconus,  
Be the grace of Jhesus,  
    That lady y schall wyne  
Of Maboun and Yrayn ;  
Schame i schall, certayne,  
    Hem bothe wythout and wythinne.

1730

Tho toke they har reste,  
In lykynge as hem leste,  
    In the castell that nyght ;

---

\* Original reading : *hys*.

A morow Lybeaus hym prest  
 In armes that wer best  
     And fressch he was to fyght. 1740  
 Lambard ladde hym forth well whate,  
 And broghte hym at the castell gate,  
     And fond hyt open ryght,  
 No ferther ne dorste hym brynge,  
 For soth wythout lesyng,  
     Erll, baroun, ne knyght.

But turnede hom agayn,  
 Save syr Gylet hys swayn  
     Wolde wyth hym ryde ;  
 He swor his oth serceyn, 1750  
 He wold se hare brayn,  
     Yf they hym wold abyde.  
 To the castell he rod  
 And hovede and abod,  
     To Jhesu bad and tolde,  
 To sende hym tydyng glad  
 Of ham that longe had  
     That lady yn prysoun holde.

Syr Lybeaus knyght certeys  
 Rod ynto the palys, 1760  
     And at the halle alyghte ;  
 Trompes, schalmuses,  
 He seygh be for the hyegh deys  
     Stonde yn hys syghte.  
 Amydde the halle flore  
 A fere stark and store  
     Was lyght and brende bryght,  
 Nere the dore he yede,  
 And ladde yn hys stede,  
     That wont was helpe hym yn fyght. 1770

Lybeaus inner gan pace,  
 To se ech a place,  
     The hales yn the halle,  
 Of mayne mor ne lassē  
 Ne sawe he body ne face  
     But menstrales yclodeth yn palle.



Wyth harp, fydele, and rote,  
 Orgenes, and mery note,  
     Well mery they maden alle ;  
 Wyth sytole, and sawtrye, 1780  
 So moch melodyc  
     Was never wythinne walle.

Before ech menstrale stod  
 A torche fayre and good,  
     Brennynge \* fayre and bryght ;  
 Inner more he yode,†  
 To wyte wyth egre mode  
     Ho scholde wyth hym fyghte.  
 He yede ynto the corneres,  
 And lokede on the pylers, 1790  
     That selcouth wer of syghte,  
 Of jasper, and of fyn crystall,  
 Swych was pylers and wall,  
     No rythere be ne myghte.

The thores wer of bras,  
 The wyndowes wer of glas,  
     Florysseth wyth imagerye,  
 The halle ypaynted was,  
 No rythere never ther nas,  
     That he hadde seye wyth eye. 1800  
 He sette hym an that deys,  
 The menstrales wer yn pes,  
     That were go good and trye,  
 The torches that brende bryght  
 Quenchede anon ryght,  
     The menstrales wer awaye.

Dores and wyndowes alle  
 Beten yn the halle,  
     As hyt wer voys of thunder ;  
 The stones of the walle 1810  
 Over hym gon falle,  
     That thought hym mych wonther.

\* Original reading : *Brenmyge*.

† Original reading : *Tide*.

That deys began to schake,  
 The erthe began to quake,  
     As he satte hym under;  
 The rof abone unlek,  
 And the faunsere ek,  
     As hyt wolde asonder.

As he sat thus dysmayde,  
 And held hymself betrayde, 1820  
     Stedes herde he naye.  
 Thanne was he bette ypayd,  
 And to hymself he sayd,  
     Yet y hope to playe.  
 He lokede ynto a feld,  
 Ther he sawe, wyth sper and scheld,  
     Come ryde knytes tweye;  
 Of purpur Inde armure  
 Was lyngell and trappure,  
     Wyth gold garlandys gay. 1830

That on rod ynto the halle,  
 And ther he gan to kalle,  
     Syr knyght aunterous,  
 Swych cas ther ys befallle,  
 Thaugth thou be proud yn palle,  
     Fyghte thou most wyth us.  
 Queynte thou art of gynne,  
 Yf thou that lady wyne,  
     That ys so precyous.  
 Tho seyde Lybeaus, anon ryght, 1840  
 All fressch i am to fyght,  
     Thorough help of swete Jhesus.

Lybeaus wyth goodwyll  
 Into hys sadell gan skyll,  
     And a launce yn hond he hent;  
 Quyk he rod hem tyll,  
 In feld hys son to fell,  
     Therto was hys talent.  
 Togedere whan they mette  
 Upon har scheldes they sette 1850  
     Strokes of thoughty dent:

Mabounys schaft to-brast,  
Tho was he sore agast,  
And held hymself yschent.

And wyth that strok feloun  
Lybeaus bar hym adoun  
Over hys horses tayle,  
For hys hynder arsoun  
To-brak and fyll adoun  
In that feld saunz fayle. 1860  
And neygh he hadde hym selayn,  
Wyth that come ryde Yrayn  
Wyth helm, hauberke, and mayle,  
All fressch he was to fyght,  
He thought wyth mayn and myght  
Syr Lybeaus for to asayle.

Lybeaus of hym was war,  
And sper to hym he bar,  
And lette hys brother styлле ;  
Swych dent he smot dar 1870  
That hys hauberke to-tar,  
And that lykede Yrayn ylle.  
Har launces they brak atwo,  
Swertes they through out tho,  
Wyth herte grym and grylle,  
And gonne for to fyghte,  
Eyder prevede hys myghte  
Other for to spylle.

As they togedere hewe  
Maboun the mare schrewe 1880  
In feld up aros ;  
He sawe and well knew  
That Yrayn smot dentys fewe,  
Therefore hym grym agros.  
To Yrayn he ran ryght,  
To helpe sle yn fyght  
Lybeaus that was of noble los ;  
But Lybeaus faught wyth hem bothe,  
Thaugh they wer never so wrothe,  
And kepte hymself yn clos. 1890

Whan Yrayn saw Maboun,  
 He smot a strok feloun  
     To syr Lybeaus wyth yre,  
 Before [hys] forther arsoun  
 Als sket he karf adoun  
     Of Lybeaus stede swyre.  
 But Lybeaus was werroure slegh,  
 And smot of hys theygh,  
     Fell, and bone, and lyre ;  
 'Tho halp hym nacht hys armys  
 Hys chauntement, ne hys charmys,  
     Adoun fell that sory syre.

1900

Lybeaus adoun lyght,  
 Afote for to fyghte,  
     Maboun and he yn fere ;  
 Swych strokes they gon dyghte,  
 That sparkes sprong out bryght  
     From scheld and helmes clere.  
 As they togedere sette,  
 Har swerdes togedere mette,  
     As ye may lythe and lere ;  
 Maboun, that more schrewe,  
 To-karf that sworde of Lybeawe,  
     A twynne quyt and skere.

1910

Lybeaus was sore aschamed,  
 An yn hys herte agramede,  
     For he hadde ylore hys sworde ;  
 And hys stede was lamed,  
 And he schulde be defamed,  
     To Artour kyng, hys lord.  
 To Yrayn tho he ran,  
 Hys sword he drough out than,  
     Was scharp of egge, and ord ;  
 To Maboun he ran ryght,  
 Well faste he gan to fyght,  
     Of love ther nas no word.

1920

But ever faught Maboun,  
 As a wod lyoun,  
     Lybeaus for the flo ;

But Lybeaus karf adoun  
Hys scheld wyth hys fachoun,  
That he tok Yrayn fro.  
Wythout more tale teld,  
The left arm wyth the scheld  
Well evene he smot of tho ;  
Tho spak Maboun hym tylle,  
Of thyne dentys ylle,  
Gentyll knyght, now ho.

1930

And i woll yelde me,  
In trewthe and lewtè,  
At thyn owene wyll ;  
And that lady fre,  
That ys yn my poustè,  
I wyll the take tylle.  
For thorough that swordes dent  
Myn hond y have yschent,  
That femyn wyll me spyllle ;  
I femynede hem bothe,  
Sertayn wythoute nothe,  
In feld our fon to fylle.

1940

1950

Seyde Lybeaus, Be my thryste,  
I nell naght of thy yefte,  
All thys world to wyne ;  
But ley on strokes swyfte,  
Our on schall other lyste  
That hedde of be the skynne.  
Maboun and Lybeaus  
Faste togedere hewes,  
And stente for no synne ;  
Lybeaus was more of myght,  
And karf hys helm bryght,  
And hys hedde atwynne.

1960

Tho Maboun was ysclayn,  
He ran ther he lefte Yrayn,  
Wyth fachoun yn hys fest ;  
For to cleve hys brayn,  
Therof he was certayn,  
And trewly was hys tryst.

And whanne he com thore,  
 Away he was ybore, 1970  
     Whyderward he nyste ;  
 He softe hym for the nones,  
 Wyde yn alle the wones,  
     To fyghte more hym lyste.

And whanne he ne fond hym noght,  
 He held hymself be caught,  
     And gan to syke sare,  
 And seyde yn word and thought  
 Thys wyll be sore abought  
     That he ys thus fram me yfare. 1980  
 On kne hym sette that gentyll knyght  
 And prayde to Marie bryght,  
     Kevere hym of hys care ;  
 As he prayde thus yn halle  
 Out of the ston walle  
     A wyndow down fyll thare ;

And a greet wonder wythall  
 In hys herte gan fall,  
     As he sat and beheld ;  
 A warm come out a pace, 1990  
 Wyth a womannes face,  
     Was yong and nothyng eld.  
 Hyr body and hyr wyngys  
 Schynede yn all thynges,  
     As gold gaylyche ygyld were,  
 Her tayle was myche unmete,  
 Hyr pawes grymly grete,  
     As ye may lythe and lere.\*

Lybeaus began to swete,  
 Ther he satte yn hys sete, 2000  
     Maad as he were,  
 So sore hym gan agryse,  
 That he ne myghte aryse,  
     Thaugh hyt hadde bene all afere.†

\* This is the only stanza in which the poet has neglected the recurrent rhymes ; in other respects it appears to be perfect.

† Conjectural emendation : *a fere*.

And er Lybeaus hyt wyste  
 The warm wyth mouth hym kyste,  
     All aboute hys swyre ;  
 And after that kyssinge  
 The warmys tayle and wynges  
     Anon hyt fell fro hyre.

2010

So fayr yn all thyng  
 Woman wythout lesyng  
     Ne saw he never er tho,  
 But sche stod before hym naked,  
 And all her body quaked,  
     Therefore was Lybeaus wo.  
 Sche seyde, Knyght gentyle,  
 God yelde the dy whyle,  
     That my son thou woldest slo ?  
 Thou hast yslawe nouthe  
     Two clerkes kouthes,  
     To deeth they wold me have ydo.

2020

Be est, north, and sowthe,  
 Be wordes of har mouthe,  
     Well many man kouth they schend ;  
 Wyth hare chauntement,  
 To warm me hadde they ywent,  
     In wo to welde and wende.  
 Tyll y hadde kyste Gaweyn,  
 Eyther som other knyght sertayn,  
     That wer of hys kende ;  
 And for thou savyst my lyf,  
 Casteles ten and fyf  
     I yeve the wythouten ende :

2030

And y to be thy wyf,  
 Ay wythouten stryf,  
     Yf hyt ys Artours wylle.  
 Lybeaus was glad and blythe,  
 And lepte to horse swythe,  
     And lefte that ladye styлле.  
 But ever he dradde Yrayn,  
 For he was naght yslayn,  
     Wyth speche he wold hym spyлле ;

2040

To the castell gate he rode,  
And hovede and abod,  
To Jhesu he bad wyth good wylle.

Sende hym tydyngys glad,  
Of ham that long hadde  
That lady do vylanye ;  
Lybeaus Lambard tolde, 2050  
And othre knyghtes bolde,  
How hym there gan agye ;  
And how Maboun was yslayn,  
And wondede was Yrayn,  
Thorough grace of seynt Marie ;  
And how that lady bryght  
To a warm was dyght,  
Thorough kraft of chaunterye.

And how thugh kus of a knyght  
Woman sche was aplyght, 2060  
And a semyly creature ;  
But sche stod me before,  
Naked as sche was ybore,  
And scyde, now y am sure  
My fomen beth yslayn,  
Maboun and Yrayn,  
In pes now may we dure.  
Whan syr Lybeaus, knyght of prys,  
Hadde ytolde the styward, y wys,  
All thys aventure, 2070

A robe of purpure bys,  
Ypelvryd wyth puryd grys,  
Anon he lette forth brynge ;  
Calles and keverchefs ryche  
He sent her pryvylyche,  
Anon wythout dwellynge ;  
And whan sche was redy dyght,  
Sche rod with mayn and myght,  
And wyth her another kyng ;  
And all the peple of the toune, 2080  
Wyth a fayr processoun,  
Thyder they gonne thrynge.



Whan the lady was come to towne,  
Of gold and ryche stones a krowne,

    Upon her hedde was sette ;  
And weren glad and blythe,  
And thonkede god fele syde,  
    That her bales bette.

All the lordes of dignytè,  
Dede her omage and feawtè, 2090

    As hyt was due dette ;  
Thus Lybeaus, wys and wyght,  
Wan that ylke lady bryght,  
    Out of the develes nette.

Sevè nyght they made sojour,  
Wyth Lambard yn the tour,  
    And all the peple yn same ;  
And tho wente they wyth honour  
To the noble kyng Artour,

    Wyth moche gle and game : 2100  
And thonkede godes myghtes,  
Artour and hys knyghtes,

    That he ne hadde no schame ;  
Artour yaf her also blyve  
Lybeaus to be hys wyfe,  
    That was so gentyll a dame.

The joy of that bredale  
Nys not told yn tale,  
    Ne rekened yn no gest ;

Barons and lordynges fale 2110  
Come to that semyly sale,

    And ladyes well honeste.  
Ther was ryche servyse,  
Of all that men kouth devyse,

    To lest and ek to mest ;  
The menstrales, yn bour and halle,  
Hadde ryche yftes wythalle,  
    And they that weryn unwrest.

Fourty dayes they dwellde,\*  
And har feste helde,

2120

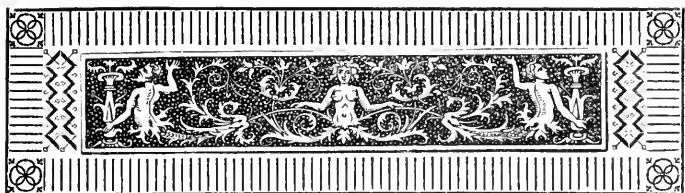
Wyth Artour the kyng ;  
As the Frenssch tale teld,  
Artour, wyth knyghtes beld,

At hom gan hem brynge.  
Fele yer they levede yn same,  
Wyth moche gle and game,  
Lybeaus and that swete thyng.  
Jhesu Cryst our savyour,  
And hys moder, that swete flour,  
Graunte us alle good endyng.

2130

\* Original reading : *dwellde*.





## THE GESTE OF KYNG HORN.

THIS romance, the most ancient, it is believed, that exists in the English language (unless we except the *Tristrem* of Thomas Rymour), and of which no more than one single copy is extant, is preserved in a MS. of the Harleian library, in the British Museum number 2253, and written, apparently, in the time of King Edward the Second, by some French or Norman scribe, by whom likewise the poem itself may have been composed in the preceding reign. Doctor Percy, indeed, brings it down as low as King Richard II., which is utterly improbable; and Warton places it in the reign of Edward I., which is absolutely impossible; since, as he well knew, it contains an elegy upon the death of that monarch. The present poem, for the salvation of parchment, is written with two lines in one. The letters "t" and "y" (vowel) are in the Saxon form; "y" is everywhere used for "th" and "z" for "y" (consonant), or, occasionally, "gh." The use of the "z" might have been retained, after the example of respectable editors; but, with the Saxon characters, is sacrificed to public taste or prejudice.

This romance is mentioned, among many others, in Chaucer's "*Rime of sir Thopas*"—

"Men speken of romaunces of pris,  
Of Horn-child and Ypotis,  
Of Bevis and Sir Gy;"

as well as in an old metrical translation, in the Bodleian library, of Guido de Colonna, on the Trojan war, quoted by Warton,\* but not written, as he supposes, by Lydgate—

"Many speken of men that romaunces rede, &c.  
Of Keveloke, Horne, and of Wade,†  
In romances that of them be made,

---

\* "*History of English Poetry*," II., n. 9. Keveloke, in the extract, should be Haveloke, the hero of a famous story, not entirely perished.

† We, unfortunately, have lost the writings, and even the history of this cele

That gestours dos of him gestes,  
 At mangerés and at great 'estes,  
 Here dedis ben in remembraunce  
 In many fair romaunce."

The story itself, if not actually printed, is suspected to have been well known in Scotland above two hundred years ago: as, in Wedderburn's *Complainte*, which appeared at St Andrews in 1549, we find "the tayl quhou the kyng of Estmureland marcit the kingis dochtir of Vestmureland." These seem the Estnesse and Westnesse of the present poem, and apparently signify England and Ireland. No country, at the same time, in Britain, was ever called Eastmoreland; and from an old rhyme, cited by Usher (p. 303), Westmoreland received that appellation from a fabulous king—

"Here the king Westmer  
 Slow the king Rothwyger."

A "king Estmere," likewise, is the subject of one of Percy's ballads (I, 62), whose native country appears to be Spain.

In a large and valuable manuscript, of the fourteenth century, in the library of the Faculty of Advocates, Edinburgh, numbered W. 4. 1., and being a present from the late Lord Auchinleck, is an excellent, but, like almost every other in the volume, imperfect

brated personage; except as to a very few anecdotes or allusions, which only serve to whet our anxiety for the rest: Chaucer, in his "Merchant's Tale," has this couplet—

"And eke thise olde widewes (god it wote)  
 They connen so moch craft in Wades bote."—V. 9297.

"Upon this," quoth the worthy Tyrwhitt, very happily, "Speght remarks as follows:—"Concerning Wade, and his bote called Guingelot, as also his straunge exploits in the same, because the matter is long and fabulous, i passe it over."—"Tantamne rem tam negligenter? Mr Specht probably did not foresee, that posterity would be as much obliged to him for a little of this *fabulous matter* concerning Wade and his bote, as for the gravest of his annotations" (IV., 284). "The story of Wade," he adds, "is mentioned again by our author in his *Troilus*, iii., 615—

"He songe, she playde, he tolde a tale of Wade."

Sir Francis Kynaston, in his *Commentary* on "The loves of Troilus and Creseid," says that Chaucer means a ridiculous romance; for, in his time, there was a foolish fabulous legend of one Wade and his boate Guingelot, wherein he did many strange things, and had many wonderfull adventures." He is suspected to have been either a Scot or a Pict (or Pik, as Mr Pinkerton will have it), and to have been the chief or leader in an eruption through the Roman wall; in which was a chasm known, in old time, by the name of "Wades-gapp." See Wallis's *History of Northumberland*, II., 3, n (e).

romance, very different from the present, of "Hornchilde & maiden Rimnild [not Rinivel]," in stanzas beginning—

"My leve frende dere."

This curious fragment will be found at the end of the present volume.\*

An imperfect copy of the original French romance, a performance of great merit, is preserved in the Harleian MS., No. 527. It is, to all appearance, as old as the twelfth century, but, unfortunately, defective both at the beginning and at the end. The poem is in couplets, of which every ten, twelve, or fifteen terminate in the same rhyme.

The English romance, here given, which contains no more than 1546 lines, is rather an abridgement than a translation of the French copy, the fragment of which consists of no less than 2760. Most of the names, also, are entirely different; nor can the identity of the two poems be easily ascertained, so that it is possible there may have been another French romance on this subject; since it would be very singular to find a translator indulging himself in such excessive liberties. Doctor Percy, therefore, had very little reason to assert that "the old metrical romance of Hornchild appears of genuine English growth;" and this after the judicious Tyrwhitt had given his decisive opinion, "that we have no English romance, prior to the age of Chaucer, which is not a translation or imitation of some earlier French romance." (IV., 68). Any peculiar instances of "Anglo-Saxon language or idiom," which should induce him to imagine that it "can scarce be dated later than within a century after the Conquest" (I., lxxviii.), will be rather difficult to discover; since, in fact, it savours much more of the Norman idiom than the Saxon.

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\* See Appendix.



## THE GESTE OF KYNG HORN.\*

ALLE heo ben blythe  
 That to my song ylythe,  
 A song ychulle ou singe  
 Of Allof the gode kyng.  
 Kyng he wes by Weste,†  
 The whiles hit yleste ;  
 Ant Godylt his gode quene,  
 Ne feyroke myghte bene ;  
 Ant huere sone, hihthe Horn,  
 Feyroke child ne myghte be born. 10  
 For reyn ne myhte by ryne,  
 Ne sonne myhte shyne‡  
 Feyroke child then he was,  
 Bryht so ever eny glas ;  
 So whit so eny lylve flour,  
 So rose red wes his colour.  
 He wes feyr and eke bold,  
 Ant of fyftene wynter old :  
 Nis non his yliche  
 In none kinges ryche, 20  
 Tueye feren he hadde,  
 That he with him ladde,

\* The title prefixed to the original manuscript, "Her bygyneth the geste of kyng Horn," though written in a different ink from the poem itself, is of the same age and character, and apparently by the same hand. It was, therefore, thought right to prefer it to "Horn child," which, however, appears to have been its popular name, unless Chaucer actually meant another romance on the same subject, which will be mentioned elsewhere.

† This country, in other places called Sudene or Suddene, appears, from the French MS. (in which the latter name occurs), to be Bretagne.

‡ Mr. Ellis ingeniously conjectures the meaning to be, "For rain might not rain upon, nor sun shine upon, fairer child than he was : " he conceives that by-ryne is be-rain, a prefix to verbs, which stands in lieu of many prepositions, as in be-dawb, to dawb all over, &c. It might be difficult, at the same time, to find an instance of by ryne for berain ; so that we may conjecture the signification was intended to be of Horn, that, neither could rain or frost fall (see Ryne in the glossary), or sun shine, upon a "Feyroke child then he was."

All richemenne sones,  
 And alle suythe feyre gomes,  
 Wyth him forté pleye.  
 Mest he lovede tueye,  
 That on wes hoten Athulf chylde,  
 And that other Fykenyld :  
 Athulf wes the beste,  
 And Fykenyld the werste. 30  
 Hyt was upon a someres day,  
 Al so ich ou telle may,  
 Allof the gode kyng  
 Rode upon ys pleyyng,  
 Bi the see side,  
 Ther he was woned to ryde,  
 With him ne ryde bote tuo,  
 Al to fewe hue wer tho.  
 He fond by the stronde  
 Aryved on is londe, 40  
 Shipes tyftene,  
 Of Sarazynes kene,  
 He askede whet hue sohten,  
 Other on is lond brohten.  
 A payen hit yherde,  
 And sone him onsuerde,  
 Thy lond-folk we wolleth slon,  
 That ever Crist leveth on,  
 And the we wolleth ryht anon,  
 Shalt thou never henne gon. 50  
 The kyng lyghte of his stede,  
 For tho he hevede nede,  
 Ant his gode feren tuo,  
 Mid y wis huem wes ful wo ;  
 Swerde hy gonne gripe,  
 And togedere smyte,  
 Hy smyten under shelde,  
 That hy somme yfelde.  
 The kyng hade to fewe,  
 Ayeyn so monie schrewe, 60  
 So fele myhten ethe \*

---

\* In the old French fragment, already described, Aaluf is said to have been slain, in one place, by Romuld *le malfé*, in another, by Rollac, the son of Godebrand, and

Bringe thre to dethe.  
 The payns come to londe,  
 And nomen hit an honde,  
 The folk hy gonne quelle,  
 And Sarazyns to felle.  
 Ther ne myghte libbe  
 The fremede ne the sibbe  
 Bote he is lawe forsoke,  
 And to huere toke. 70  
 Of alle wymmanne  
 Werst was Godyld thanne,  
 For Allof hy wepeth sore,  
 And for Horn yet more ;  
 Godild hade so muche sore,  
 That habbe myhte hue na more.  
 Hue wente out of halle,  
 From hire maidnes alle,  
 Under a roche of stone,  
 There hue wonede al one ; 80  
 Ther hue servede gode,  
 Ayeyn the payenes forbode ;  
 Ther hue servede Crist,  
 That the payenes hit nust ;  
 Ant ever hue bad for Horn child,\*  
 That Crist him wrthe myld.  
 Horn wes in payenes hond,  
 Mid is feren of the lond,

nephew of Hildebrant and Herebrant, two African Saracen \* kings, who, afterward, invade Westness or Ireland.

\* Doctor Percy, in a note upon Shakspeares tragedy of King Lear (Steevens's edition, P. 172), asserts "The word *child* (however it came to have this sense) is often applied to *knights*, &c." and that "The same idiom occurs in Spenser's *Faery queen*, where the famous *knight sir Tristram* is frequently called *Child Tristram*." In this assertion, however he has been somewhat too hasty; Child Tristram, in Spenser, being no knight at the time, but only just dubbed squire by sir Calidore. His reference, also, to "B. v. C. ii. st. 8. 13." is inaccurate ; neither does B. vi. C. 8. st. 15. relate to Tristram but to Prince Arthur. Its proper signification seems to be a youth or young man, or, perhaps, man in general. Sir Tryamoure, in the romance under that title, is repeatedly called "the *chylde*," before he was made a knight. See sig. D. 4, 6.

\* By these odious appellations the old English writers understood the Pagan Danes and Norwegians who in the ninth century, ravaged Great Britain and Ireland in every part. Geoffrey of Monmouth, it is remarkable, called Gormund, (a well-known king of the Danes, defeated, and baptised by King Alfred) king of the Africans (B. 11, C. 8): and, in the spurious laws of Edward the Confessor, it is asserted that King Arthur defeated the Saracens (meaning, peradventure, the Pagan Saxons).



Muche wes the feyrhade  
That Jhesu Crist him made ; 90  
Payenes him wolde slo,  
And summe him wolde flo,  
Yyf Hornes feyrnesse nere  
Yslawe thise children were.  
Tho spec on admyrold,  
Of wordes he wes swythe bold :  
Horn, thou art swythe kene,  
Bryht of hewe and shene,  
Thou art fayr and eke strong,  
And eke eveneliche long, 100  
Yef thou to lyve mote go,  
Ant thyne feren also,  
That y may byfalle,  
That ye shulde slen us alle ;  
Tharefore thou shalt to streme go,  
Thou ant thy feren also,  
To shipe ye shule founde,  
And sinke to the grounde,  
The see the shal adrenche,  
Ne schal hit us of thenche, 110  
For yef thow were alyve,  
With suerd other with knyve,  
We shulden alle deye,  
Thy fader deth to beye.  
The children ede to the stronde,  
Wryngynde huere honde,  
Ant into shipes borde,  
At the furste worde :  
Ofte hade Horn be wo,  
Ah never wors then him wes tho. 120  
The see bygon to flowen,  
And Horne faste to rowen,  
Ant that ship wel suythe drof,  
Ant Horn wes adred therof,  
Hue wenden mid y wisse,  
Of huere lyve to misse,  
Al the day and al the nyht,  
O that sprong the day-lyht,  
Flotterede Horn by the stronde,  
Er he seye eny londe. 130

Feren, quoth Horn the yynge,  
 Y telle ou tydyng,  
 Ich here foules singe,  
 And se the grases springe,  
 Blythe be ye alyve,  
 Ur ship is come to ryve.  
 Of shipe hy gonne founde,  
 And sette fot to grounde,  
 By the see syde,  
 Hure ship bigon to ryde. 140  
 Thenne spec him child Horn,  
 In Sudenne he was yborn :  
 "Non ship by the flode  
 Have dayes gode ;  
 By the see brynke  
 No water the adrynke ;  
 Softe mote thou sterye  
 That water the ne derye.  
 Yef thou comest to Sudenne,  
 Gret hem that me kenne ; \* 150  
 Gret wel the gode  
 Quene Godild mi moder ;  
 And seythene hethene kyng,  
 Jhesu Cristes wytherlyng ;  
 That ich, hol and fere,  
 In lond aryvede here ;  
 Ant say that he shal fonde  
 Then deth of myne honde."  
 The ship bigon to fleoten,  
 And Horn child to weopen, 160  
 By dales and by dounes,†  
 The children coden to tounes,

\* This king is supposed to be Mody, the Saracen, whose death he here threatens and whom he after ward slew. In the original his name is Romund :

"*Kuant il fu od Romund en Suddene la lee.*" F. 59.

† Horn and his play-fellows have arrived in this country, from Sudene, by sea. Westnesse and Sudenne must therefore be different countries, more especially as Horn sends a message back from the former to the latter (V. 149.) That Aylmer, however, the father of Rymenild, who is here king of Westnesse, is, in the French MS. Hunlaf, the father of Rimel (king of Sudene,) who is elsewhere said to have reigned in Bretagne, where he had resided at Lions (Caer Leon?) a brave city. "*Li rois a Lions ceste cité vaillant.*" At V. 954, Horn says of himself—

"Ich seche from *Westnesse*  
 Horn knight of *Estnesse.*"

Metten hue Eylmer the kyng,  
 Crist him yeve god tymyng,  
 Kyng of Westnesse,  
 Crist him myhte blesse,  
 He spec to Horn child,  
 Wordes suythe myld :  
 "Whenne be ye, gomen,  
 That bueth her a londe ycomen ?" 170  
 Alle threttene  
 Of bodye suythe kene ;  
 By god, that me made,  
 So feyr a felanradet  
 Ne seh y never stonde  
 In Westnesse londe :  
 Say me whet ye seche."  
 Horn spec huere speche,  
 Horn spac for huem alle,  
 For so it moste byfalle, 180  
 He wes the wyseste,  
 And of wytte the beste :  
 "We bueth of Sudenne,  
 Ycome of gode kenne,  
 Of Cristene blode,  
 Of cunne swythe gode ;  
 Payenes ther connen aryve,  
 And Cristine brohten of lyve,  
 Slowen and to-drowe,  
 Cristinemen ynowe ; 190

He is now in Ireland, whence he returns to Westnesse (*V.* 1021); where Rymenild was (*V.* 960).\* He calls himself, in another place, "Horn of *Westnesse*" (*V.* 1215). There are two places in Holderness, Yorkshire, called East-ness and West-ness, at this day; but ness in that county signifies merely an inlet of water, in Scotland it means a nose, promontory, or headland, jutting out into the sea, as Buchan-ness, Fife-ness, &c.

\* A mistake, it is possible, for *whence*, unless *whenne* can be found elsewhere with the same signification.

† Rightly felaurade.

\* The French MS. makes Horn say he will go to see her in Britaine (where, it elsewhere appears Hunlaf, her father, reigned): so that Britain seems to be the same with Westness or Suddene.

So Crist me mote rede,  
 Ous hy duden lede  
 In to a galeye,  
 With the see to pleye ;  
 Day is gon and other,  
 Withoute seyl and rother,  
 Ure ship flet forth ylome,  
 And her to londe hit ys ycome.  
 Nou thou myht us slen and bynde,  
 Oure honde us bihynde ;  
 Ah yef hit is thi wille,  
 Help us that we ne spyllc."

200

Tho spac the gode kyng,  
 He nes never nythyng :  
 "Scy, child, whet ys thy name,  
 Shal the tide bote game?"  
 The child him onsuerde,  
 So sone he hit yherde,  
 "Horn ycham yhote,  
 Ycome out of this bote,  
 From the see side ;  
 Kyng, wel the bitide."  
 "Horn child," quoth the kyng,  
 "Wel brouk † thou thy nome yyng."  
 Horn him goth so stille,  
 Bi dale and bi hille, ‡  
 Horn hath londe sounc  
 Thurghout uch a tounc,  
 "So shal thi nome sprynge,  
 From kyng to kyngc,  
 Ant thi feirnesse  
 Aboute Westnesse.  
 Horn, thou art so suete,  
 Ne shal y the forlete."  
 Hom rod Aylmer the kyng,  
 And Horn with him his fundlyng,  
 And alle his yfere,  
 That him were so duere.  
 The kyng com into halle,  
 Among his knyghtes alle,

210

220

230

\* Original reading : *onsuere*.

† Original reading : *bront* or *brouc*. The *u* in the MS. has everywhere the shape of an *n*.

‡ Original reading : *Bi dales and bi halles*.

Forth he clepeth Athelbrus,  
 His stiward, and him seide thus,  
 "Stiward tac thou here\*  
 My fundling for to lere  
 Of thine mestere,  
 Of wode and of ryvere,  
 Ant toggen o the harpe,†  
 With is nayles sharpe ;  
 Ant tech him alle the listes  
 That thou ever wysters ‡

240

\* Thus Robert of Brunne, in his version of *Le Brut de Maistre Wace* (See Hearne's edition of *Robert of Gloucester*, p. 622):—

"Marian faire in chere  
 He couthe *of wode and ryvere*,  
 In alle maner of venerie, &c."

It is explained in *The rime of Sire Thopas*—

"He coude *hunte at the wilde dere*,  
 And *ride on hauking for the rivere*."

See, likewise, *The Squyr of low degree*, V. 774; and *The Franklein's tale*, V. 1752.

† This is an ordinary accomplishment of the heroes of romance. In the original fragment, at the table of King Gudred, his daughter Lenbure, her two brothers, and Horn, pass the harp to each other; the latter particularly distinguishes himself:—

"Lors print la harpe a sei si commence a temprer  
 Deu ki dunc lesgardaft, cum il la sot manier!  
 Cum ses cordes tuchot, cum les fescit trembler,  
 A quantes faire les chanz a kuantes organer,  
 Del armonie del ciel lie pureit remembrer  
 Sur tuz ceus ke i sunt fait cist à merveiller,  
 Kuant celes notes ot fait prent sen amunter,  
 E par tut autre tuns fait les cordes soner :  
 Mut sesmerveillent tuit quil la sot ci manier,  
 E quant il ot ci fait comença a noter  
*Le lay dunt orains dis\* de Batolf* haut e cler  
 Si cum sunt cil Bretun de tel fait customer."

Sir Tristram, in his youth, was sent into France for his education, and there "learned to be an harper, passing all other, that there was none such called in no countrey." *Mort d'Arthur*, P. 1, C. 3. See also C. 59, and more instances in the *Roman de Tristan*, Rouen, 1489. In Mr. Douce's MS. he says to Ysolt—

"Od ma harpe me delitois,  
 Je noi confort ki tant amoie,  
 Ben tost en oist parler,  
 Ke mult savoie ben harper.

Bons lais de harpe vus apri,  
 Lais Bretuns de nostre pais."

‡ Original reading : *wystest*.

\* "*Batolf le fiz Hunlaf rei de nobleté,*  
*Ki en Bretagne maint, ke cest sun herité,*  
*Le fist de sa sorur Rimel od la grant beuté,*" &c.

Byfore me to kerven,  
And of my coupe to serven ;  
Ant his feren devyse  
With ous other servise.  
Horn child thou understand,  
Tech him of harpe and of song."

Athelbrus gon leren  
Horn, and hyse feren,  
Horn mid herte lahte  
Al that mon him tahte. 250

Withinne court and withoute,  
And over al aboute,  
Lovede men Horn child,  
And most him lovede Rymenyld,  
The kinges ounce dohter.  
For he wes in hire thote.  
Hue lovede him in hire mod,  
For he wes feir and eke god,  
And thah hue ne dorste at bord  
Mid him speke ner a word, 260

Ne in the halle,  
Among the knyhtes alle,  
Hyre sorewe ant hire pyne  
Nolde never fyne,  
Bi daye ne by nyhte  
For hue speke ne myhte  
With Horn that wes so feir and fre ;  
Tho hue ne myhte with him be,  
In herte hue hade care and wo,  
And ther hue bithohte hire tho, 270

Hue sende hyre sonde  
Athelbrus to honde,  
That he come hire to,  
And also shulde Horn do,  
In to hire bourre,  
For hue bigon to loure :  
And the sonde sayde  
That seek wes the mayde,  
And bed him come suythe,  
For hue nis nout blythe. 280

The stiward wes in huerte wo,  
For he nuste whet he shulde do,

What Rymenild bysohte  
Gret wonder him thohte,  
Aboute Horn the yinge  
To boure fortè bringe ;  
He thohte on is mode  
Hit nes for none gode,  
He tok with him an other,  
Athulf Hornes brother : 290  
“Athulf,” quoth he, “ryht anon,  
Thou shalt with me to boure gon,  
To speke with Rymenild stille,  
To wyte hyre wille ;  
Thou art Hornes yliche,  
Thou shalt hire bysuyke :  
Sore me adrede,  
That hue wole Horn mysrede.”  
Athelbrus and Athulf bo  
To hire boure beth ygo, 300  
Upon Athulf childe  
Rymenild con waxe wilde ;  
Hue wende Horn it were  
That hue hade there.  
Hue seten adoun stille,  
And seyden hure wille,  
In hire armes tueye  
Athulf he con leye.  
“Horn,” quoth heo, “wel longe  
Y have loved the stronge ; 310  
Thou shalt thy treuthe plyhte  
In myn hond with rythe  
Me to spouse welde,  
And ich the loverd to helde.  
So stille so hit were  
Athulf seyde in hire eere  
“Ne tel thou no more speche,  
May y the byseche,  
Thi tale gyn thou lynne,  
For Horn nis nout her-ynne ; 320  
Ne be we nout yliche,  
For Horn is fayr and ryche,  
Fayrore by one ribbe  
Then ani mon that libbe ;

Thah Horn were under molde  
 And other elle wher he sholde  
 Hennes a thousent milen,  
 Y nulle him bigilen."

Rymenild hire bywente,  
 Ant Athelbrus thus heo shente.\* 330

"Athelbrus, thou foule thef,  
 Ne worthest thou me never lef,  
 Went out of my boure,  
 Shame the mote by shoure,  
 Ant evel hap to undersonge,  
 And evele rode on to honge,  
 Ne speke y nout with Horne,  
 Nis he nout sa unorne."

Tho Athelbrust astounde,  
 Fel aknen to grounde : 340

"Ha, leuedy, myn owe,  
 Me lythe a lutel throwe,  
 Ant list werefore ych wonde  
 To bringen Horn to honde ;  
 For Horn is fayr and riche,  
 Nis non his ylyche ;  
 Aylmer, the gode kyng,  
 Dude him me in loking ;  
 Yif Horn the were aboute,  
 Sore ich myhte doute 350

With him thou woldest pleye,  
 Bituene ou-selven tueye,  
 Then shulde, with outhen othe,  
 The kyng us make wrothe.  
 Ah, forycf me thi teone,  
 My leuedy, ant my quene,  
 Horn y shal the fecche,  
 Wham so hit yrecche."

Rymenild ycf heo couthe  
 Con lythe with hyre mouthc, 360  
 Heo loh and made hire blythe,  
 For wel wes hire olyve.  
 "Go thou," quoth heo, "sone,  
 And send him after none,

\* Original reading, *shende*.



A skuyeres wyse,  
 When the king aryse,  
 He shal myd me bileve,  
 That hit be ner eve,  
 Have ich of him mi wille,  
 Ne recchi whet men telle. 370

Athelbrus goth with alle,  
 Horn he fond in halle,  
 Bifore the kyng o benche,  
 Wyn forté shenche.  
 Horn, quoth he, thou hende,  
 To boure gyn thou wende,  
 To speke with Rymenild the yyngel,  
 Dohter oure kyngel,  
 Words suythe bolde,  
 Thin herte gyn thou holde ; 380  
 Horn, be thou me trewe,  
 Shal the nout arewe.

He eode forth to-ryhte,  
 To Rymenild the bryhte,  
 A kne wes he him sette,  
 And suetliche hire grette,  
 Of ys fayre syhte  
 Al that boure gan lyhte.  
 He spac faire is speche,  
 Ne durth non him teche : 390

“Wel thou sitte and sothta,  
 Rymenild kinges dohter,  
 Ant thy maydnes here,  
 That sitteth thyn yfere ;  
 Kynges stiward oure  
 Sende me to boure,  
 Forté yhere, leuedy myn,  
 Whet be wille thyn.”

Rymenild up gon stonde,  
 And tok him by the honde, 400  
 Heo made feyre chere,  
 And tok him bi the suere ;  
 Ofte heo him custe,  
 So wel hyre luste :  
 Welcome, Horn, thus sayde  
 Rymenild that mayde,

An even and a morewe  
 For the ich habbe sorewe,  
 That y have no reste,  
 No slepe me ne lyste ; +10  
 Horn, thou shalt wel swythe  
 Mi longe serewe lythe,  
 Thou shalt, wythoute strive,  
 Habbe me to wyve ;  
 Horn, have of me reuthe,  
 And plyht me thi treuthe.

Horn tho him bythohte,  
 Whet he speken ohte :  
 Crist, quoth Horn, the wisse,  
 And yeve the hevene blisse, +20  
 Of thine hosebonde,  
 Who he be a londe,  
 Ich am ybore thral,  
 Thy fader fundlyng withal,  
 Of kunde me ne selde,  
 The to spouse welde,  
 Hit nere no fair weddyng  
 Bituene a thral and the kyng.  
 Tho gon Rymenild mislyken,  
 And sore bigon to syken, +30  
 Armes bigon unbowe,  
 And doun heo fel yswowe.  
 Horn hire up hente,  
 And in is armes trente,  
 He gon hire to cusse,  
 And feyre forté wisse.  
 Rymenild, quoth he, duere,  
 Help me that ych were,  
 Ydobbed to be knyhte,  
 Suete, bi al thi myhte, +40  
 To mi louerd the kyng,  
 That he me yeve dobbying ;  
 Thenne is my thralhede  
 Al wend into knythhede,  
 Y shal waxe more,  
 And do Rymenild thi lore.  
 Tho Rymenild the yynge  
 Aros of hire swowenyng :

“Nou, Horn, to sothe  
Yleve the by thyn othe, 450  
Thou shalt be maked knyht,  
Er then this fourteniht;  
Ber thou her thes coppe,  
And thes ringes ther uppe,  
To Athelbrus the styward,  
And say him, he holde foreward;  
Sey, ich him biseche,  
With loveliche speche,  
That he for the falle  
To the kynges fet in halle, 460  
That he with is worde  
The knyhty with sworde,  
With selver and with golde,  
Hit worth him wel yyolde.  
Nou Crist him lene spede  
Thin erndyng do bede.”

Horn tok is leve,  
For hit was neh eve,  
Athelbrus he sohte,  
And tok him that he brohte, 470  
Ant tolde him thare,  
Hou he hede yfare;  
He seide him is nede,  
And him bihet is mede.  
Athelbrus, so blythe,  
Eode into halle swythe,  
And seide, Kyng, now leste  
O tale mid the beste.  
Thou shalt bere coroune  
To marewe in this toune, 480  
To marewe is thi feste,  
The bihoveth geste,  
Ich the rede mid al my myht,  
That thou make Horn knyht,  
Thin armes do him welde,  
God knyht he shal the yelde.  
The kyng seide wel sone,  
Hit is wel to done;  
Horn me wel quemeth,  
Knyht him wel bysemeth; 490

He shal have mi doobbyng,  
And be myn other derlyng,  
And his feren tuelve  
He shal dobbe himselve ;  
Alle y shal hem knyhte,  
Byfore me to fyhte.  
Al that the lyhte day sprong  
Aylmere thohte long ;  
The day bigon to sprynge,  
Horn com byfore the kyng, 500  
With his tuelf fere,  
Alle ther ywere,  
Horn knyht made he,  
With ful gret solemnitè,  
Sette him on a stede,  
Red so eny glede,  
Smot him a lute wiht,  
And bed him buen a god knyht.  
Athulf vel a kne ther,  
And thonkede kyng Aylmer : 510  
“ Nou is knyht sire Horn,  
That in Sudenne wes yborn,  
Lord he is of londe,  
And of us that by him stonde,  
Thin armes he haveth, and thy sheld,  
Forté fyhte in the feld,  
Let him us alle knyhte,  
So hit is his ryhte.”  
Aylmer seide, Ful y wis,  
Nou do that thi wille ys. 520  
Horn adoun con lyhte,  
And made hem alle to knyhte,  
For muchel wes the geste,  
And more wes the feste.  
That Rymenild nes nout there  
Hire thohte sevé yere ;  
Efter Horn hue sende,  
Horn into boure wende,  
He nolde gon is one,  
Athulf wes hys ymone. 530  
Rymenild welcometh sire Horn,  
And Athulf knyht him biforn ;

“Knyht, nou is tymé  
For to sitte by me,  
Do nou that we spake,  
To thi wyf thou me take ;  
Nou thou hast wille thyne.  
Unbynd me of this pyne.”  
“Rymenild, nou be stille,  
I chulle don al thy wille. 540  
Ah, her hit so bitide  
Mid spere ichulle ryde,  
Ant my knyhtod prove,  
Er then ich the wowe.  
We bueth nou knyhtes yonge,  
Alle to day yspronge,  
Ant of the mestere  
Hit is the manere  
With sum other knyhte  
For his lemman to fythte, 550  
Er ne he eny wyf take,  
Other wyth wymmon forewart make.  
To-day, so Crist me blesse,  
Y shal do pruesse,  
For thi love mid shelde  
Amiddewart the felde,  
Yef ich come to lyve,  
Ychul the take to wyve.”  
“Knyht, y may yleve the,  
Why ant thou trewe be ; 560  
Have her this gold ring,  
Hit is ful god to thi doobbyng,  
Ygraved is on the rynge  
Rymenild thy luef the yynge ;  
Nis non betere under sonne,  
That eny mon of conne ;  
For mi love thou hit were,  
And on thy fynger thou hit bere ;  
The ston haveth suche grace  
Ne shalt thou in none place 570  
Deth underfonge,  
Ne buen yslaye with wronge,  
Yef thou lokest theran,  
And thenchest o thi lemman :

Ant sire Athulf, thi brother,  
 He shal han en other.  
 Horn, Crist y the byteche,  
 Myd mourninde speche,  
 Crist the yewe god endyng,  
 And found ayeyn the brynge." 580  
 'The knyht hire gan to cusse,\*  
 And Rymenild him to blesse.  
 Leve at hire he nom,  
 And in to halle he com ;  
 Knyhtes code to table,  
 And Horn code to stable ;  
 Ther he tok his gode fole,  
 Blac so ever eny cole,  
 With armes he him fredde,  
 Ant is fole he fedde ; 590  
 The fole bigon to springe,  
 And Horn murie to synge.  
 Horn rod one whyle  
 Wel more then a myle,  
 He sch a shyp at grounde,  
 With hethene hounde,  
 He askede wet hue hadden,  
 Other to londe ladden.  
 An hound him gan biholde,  
 And spek wordes bolde : 600  
 " This land we wollet wyne,  
 And sle that ther bueth inne."  
 Horn gan is swerd gripe,  
 Ant on is arm hit wye,  
 The Sarazyn he hitte so  
 That is hed fel to ys to.  
 Tho gonne the houndes gone  
 Aycynes Horn ys one ;  
 He lokede on is ryng,  
 Ant thohte o Rymenyld the yynge ; 610  
 He sloh ther of the beste,  
 An houndred at the leste,

\* In the original, Rimel gives him a kiss along with the ring, saying—

"Cest anel prendrez, od trestut cest baisier."

Ne mihte no mon telle  
 Alle that he gon quelle ;  
 Of that ther were oryve  
 He lasfe lut olyve.

Horn tok the maister heved  
 That he him hade byreved,  
 And sette on is suerde,  
 Aboven othen orde.

620

He ferde hom to halle,  
 Among the knyhtes alle.  
 Kyng, quoth he, wel thou sitte,  
 And thine knyhtes mitte,  
 To-day ich rod o my pleyying,  
 After my dobbyng,

Y fond a ship rowen,  
 In the sound byflowen,  
 Mid unlondisshe menne,  
 Of Sarazynes kenne,

630

To dethe forté pyne,  
 The and alle thyne ;  
 Hy gonne me asayly,  
 Swerd me nolde fayly,  
 Y smot hem alle to grounde,  
 In a lutel stounde ;

The heved ich the brynge  
 Of the maister kyng :  
 Nou have ich the yolde

That thou me knyhten wolde.\*

640

The day bigon to springe,  
 The kyng rod on hontynge,  
 To the wode wyde,  
 Ant Fykenyld bi is syde,†  
 That fals wes ant untrewē,  
 Whosé him wel yknewe.

Horn ne thohte nout him on,  
 Ant to boure wes ygon,  
 He fond Rymenild sittynde,  
 And wel sore wepynde,

650

\* Original reading : *woldest*.

† This Fykenild, in the original poem, is named Wikele. Being refused a horse by Horn, he betrays his love to the king, as in V. 690, &c.

So whyt so the sonne,  
Mid terres al byronne.  
Horn seide, Luef, thyn ore,  
Why wepest thou so sore?  
Hue seide, Ich nout ne wepe,  
Ah y shal er y slepe  
Me thohite o my metyng  
That ich rod o fysshying,  
To see my net ycaste,  
Ant wel fer hit laste, 660  
A gret fyssh at the ferste  
My net made berste,  
That fyssh me so bycahte  
That y nout ne lahte,  
Y wene y shal forleose  
The fyssh that y wolde cheose.  
Crist and seint Stevene,  
Quoth Horn, areche thy swevene.  
No shal y the byswyke,  
Ne do that the mislyke ; 670  
Ich take the myn owe,  
To holde and eke to knowe,  
For everuch other wyhte  
Therto my trouthe y plyhte.  
Wel muche was the reuthe  
That wes at thilke treuthe.  
Rymenild wep wel ylle,  
Ant Horn let terres stille :  
Lemmon, quoth he, dere,  
Thou shalt more yhere, 680  
Thy sweven shal wende,  
Summon us wole shende.  
That fyssh that brac thy net,  
Y wys it is sumwet,  
That wol us do sum teone,  
Y wys hit worth ysene.  
Aylmer rod by stoure,  
Ant Horn wes yne boure,  
Fykenyld hade envye,  
And seyde theose folye : 690  
“Aylmer, ich the werne,  
Horn the wole forberne ;



Ich herde wher he seyde,  
 Ant his suerd he leyde,  
 To brynge the of lyve,  
 And take Rymenyld to wyve ;  
 He lyht nou in boure,  
 Under covertoure,  
 By Rymenyld thy dohter,  
 And so he doth wel ofte ;  
 Do him out of londe,  
 Er he do more shonde."

700

Aylmer\* gan hom turne,  
 Wel mody, and wel sturne,  
 He fond Horn under arme,  
 In Rymenyldes barme.  
 Go out, quoth Aylmer the kyng,  
 Horn, thou foule fundlyng,  
 Forth out of boures flore,  
 For Rymenild, thin hore ;  
 Wend out of londe sone,  
 Her nast thou nout to done.  
 Wel sone bote thou flette,  
 Myd suert y shal the sette.  
 Horn eode to stable,  
 Wel modi for that fable,  
 He sette sadel on stede,  
 With armes he gon him shrede,  
 His brunie he con lace,  
 So he shulde into place,  
 His suerd he gon fonge,  
 Ne stod he nout to longe,  
 To is suerd he gon teon,  
 Ne durste non wel him seon.  
 He seide, Lemmon derlyng,  
 Nou thou havest thy swevenyng,  
 The fyssh that thyn net rende  
 From the me he sende ;  
 The kyng with me gynneth strive,  
 Away he wole me dryve,  
 Tharefore have nou godneday,  
 Nou y mot founde and fare away

710

720

730

\* King Hunlaf (the Aylmer of the present poem) and Horn have a much larger dialogue in the French original.

Into uncouth longe,  
 Wel more forté fonde,  
 Y shal wonie there  
 Fulle sevé yere,  
 At the sevé yeres ende  
 Yyf y ne come ne sende,  
 Tac thou hosebonde,  
 For me that thou ne wonde ; 740  
 In armes thou me fonge,  
 And cus me swythe longe.  
 Hy custen hem astounde,  
 And Rymenild fel to grounde.

Horn toc his leve,  
 He myhte nout byleve,  
 He tok Athulf \* is fere  
 About the swere,  
 And seide, Knyht, so trewe,  
 Kep wel my love newe, 750  
 Thou never ne forsok  
 Rymenild to kepe ant loke.  
 His stede he bigan stryde,  
 Ant forth he con hym ryde.  
 Athulf wep with eyen,  
 Ant alle that hit yseyen.  
 Horn forth him ferde,  
 A god ship he him herde,  
 That him shulde passe  
 Out of Westnesse. 760  
 The wynd bigon to stonde,  
 Ant drof hem up o longe,†  
 To lond that hy fletten,  
 For out of ship by setten.  
 He fond by the weye  
 Kynges sones tueye ;  
 That on wes hoten Athyld,  
 Ant that other Beryld ;‡

\* Athulf is never once mentioned in the French.

† The country, in which he now lands, is in the original fragment called Westir, which is there explained to mean Ireland.

“Ki ore Hirland lors Westir fu apelee.”

‡ In the French fragment the names of the two sons of King Guddred of Westir, who meet Horn, on his arrival in that kingdom, are Gofer and Egfer. The latter's

Beryld hym con preye,  
 That he shulde seye, 770  
 What he wolde there,  
 And what ys nome were.  
 Godmod, he seith, ich hote,  
 Ycomen out of this bote,  
 Wel fer from by Weste,  
 To seche myne beste.  
 Beryld con ner him ryde,  
 Ant toc him bi the bride : \*  
 "Wel be thou knyht yfounde,  
 With me thou lef a stounde, 780  
 Also ich mote sterve  
 The kyng thou shalt serve ;  
 Ne seh y never alyve,  
 So feir knyht her aryve."  
 Godmod he ladde to halle, †  
 Ant he adoun gan falle,  
 Ant sette him a knelyng,  
 Ant grette thene gode kyng.  
 Tho said Beryld, wel sone,  
 Kyng with him thou ast done, 790  
 Thi lond tac him to werie,  
 Ne shal the no man derye,  
 For he is the feyreste man,  
 That ever in this londe cam.

question is nearly the same with that in the present poem. Part of his reply is as follows :—

"De Sutdene sui nez, si ma geste ne ment  
 Fiz sui dun vavasur dun povere tenement.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 "Ne me deura nul blasmer per le mien escient,  
 Gudmod sui apelé en mun baptismement :  
 Or vus ai tut rendu vostre demandement."

It would seem, from the first of these lines, that there had been a still more ancient romance on this subject, to which Horn is thus awkwardly made to refer. It seems alluded to in two other passages :

"Joe sui veraïement Horn, dunt parolent la gent."  
 "E Horn si a torné cum dit le parchemin."

\* *Bride*, French for *bridle*.

† The parallel passage of the old fragment is in fo. 63, b. and begins—

"Kuant li reis Guddreid vit ses fiz ke sunt entrez."

Tho seide the kyng wel dere,  
 Welcome be thou here ;  
 Go, Beryld, wel swythe.  
 And make hym wel blythe,  
 Ant when thou farest to wowen,  
 Tac him thine gloven,  
 Ther thou hast munt to wyve,  
 Awey he shal the dryve ;  
 For Godmodes feyrhede  
 Shalt thou newer spede.\*

800

Hit wes at Cristesmasse,  
 Nouthur more ne lasse,  
 The kyng made feste  
 Of his knyhtes beste,  
 There come in at none  
 A geaunt suythe sone,†  
 Yarmed of paynyme,  
 Ant seide thise ryme :  
 Site kyng bi kyng,  
 Ant herkne my tidynge :  
 Her bueth paynes aryve,  
 Wel more then fyve,  
 Her beth upon honde,  
 Kyng, in thine londe,  
 On therof wol fyhte  
 To-yeynes thre knyhtes,  
 Yef ure thre sleh oure on,  
 We shulen of ure londe gon ;

810

820

\* These lines answer to the following of the original—

“Je vus alez donneer kot vus nel amenez,  
 Kas il est de beute is si elluminez,  
 Ke vus la ou il est petit serre preisez,  
 Ki tuz homes einz oes de beute pussez.”—Fo. 63, b.

† This giant is not so called in the French ; where he is named Rollac. He was the son of Godebrand, and the nephew of Hildebrant and Herebrant, two African, or Saracen, tyrants, who now arrive in Westir, and had slain Aaluf the father of Horn.\* They send him to the court to demand tribute, but Horn fights with, and kills him, and cuts off his head. The battle is described at some length. The two princes are slain by Hildebrant ; but their death is revenged by Horn. In a former part, mention is made of a similar visit to King Hunlaf by a giant named Marmorin Fo. 59.

\* It is, however, said afterward, to Horn, by Gudred---

“Si vus venez bien de Romuld le malcé,  
 Ki vostre pere Aaluf ocist par grant pecché.”

Yef ure on sleh oure thre,  
Al this lond shal ure be :  
To-morewe shal be the fyhtynge  
At the sone upspringe.

Tho seyde the kyng Thurston,  
Godmod shal be that on,  
Beryld shal be that other,  
The thridde Athyld is brother ; 830  
For hue bueth strongeste,

Ant in armes the beste.  
Ah wat shal us to rede !  
Y wene we bueth dede.  
Godmod set at borde,  
Ant seide theose wordes :  
Sire kyng, nis no ryhte  
On with thre fyhte,  
Aycynes one hounde 840  
Thre Cristene to founde ;

Ah kyng, y shal alone,  
Wythoute more ymone,  
With my suerd ful ethe,  
Bringen hem alle to dethe.  
The kyng aros amorewe,  
He hade much sorewe ;  
Godmod ros of bedde,  
With armes he him shredde ;  
His brunye he on caste,  
And knutte hit wel faste ; 850  
Ant com him to the kynge,  
At his uprysynge.

Kyng, quoth he, com to felde,  
Me forté byhelde.  
Hou we shule flyten,  
Ant togedere smiten.

Riht at prime tide,  
Hy gonnen out to ryde,  
Hy founden in a grene,  
A geaunt swythe kene, 860  
His feren him biside,  
That day forto abyde.  
Godmod hem gon asaylen.

Nolde he nout saylen,  
 He yef dundes ynowe,  
 The payen fel yswowe ;  
 Ys feren gonnen hem withdrawe,  
 For huere maister wes neh slawe.  
 He seide, Knyht, thou reste,  
 A whyle yef thou the leste, 870  
 Y ne hevede of monnes hond  
 So harde dundes in non londe,  
 Bote of the kyng Murry,  
 That wes swithe sturdy,  
 He wes of Hornes kenne,  
 Y sloh him in Sudenne.  
 Godmod him gon agryse,  
 Ant his blod aryse,  
 Byforen hym he seh stonde  
 That drof him out of londe, 880  
 Ant fader his aquelde,  
 He smot him under shelde,  
 He lokede on is ryng  
 Ant thohte o Rymenild the yynge ;  
 Mid god suerd at the furste,  
 He smot him thourh the huerte.  
 The payns bigonne to fleon,  
 Ant to huere shyte teon,  
 To ship hue wolden erne,  
 Godmod hem gon werne. 890  
 The kynges sones tweyne  
 The paiens slowe beyne.  
 Tho wes Godmod swythe wo,  
 Ant the payens he smot so,  
 That, in a lutel stounde,  
 The paiens hy felle to grounde.  
 Godmod ant is men  
 Slowe the payenes everuchen.  
 His fader deth and ys lond  
 Awrek Godmod with his hond. 900  
 The kyng, with reuthfel chere,  
 Lette leggen is sones on bere,  
 Ant bringen hom to halle,  
 Muche sorewe hue maden alle ;

In a chirche of lym and ston  
 Me buriede hem with ryche won.\*

The kyng lette forth calle  
 Hise knyhtes alle,  
 And seide, Godmod, yef thou nere  
 Alle ded we were, 910

Thou art bothe god and feyr,  
 Her y make the myn heyr,  
 For my sones bueth yslawe,  
 Ant ybroht of lyf dawē;  
 Dohter ich habbe one,†  
 Nys non so feyr of blod ant bone,  
 Ermenild that feyre may,  
 Bryht so eny someres day,  
 Hire wolle ich yeve the,  
 Ant her kyng shalt thou be. 920

He seyde, More ichul the serve,  
 Kyng, er then thou sterve;  
 When y thy dohter yerne,  
 Heo ne shal me nothyng werne.

Godmod wonede there  
 Fulle six yere,  
 Ant the sevethe yer bygon,  
 To Rymynyld sonde ne sende he non.

\* Mr. Ellis, in his criticism on Robert of Gloucester, says "The oddest peculiarity in his style is the strange use of the word *me*, which," he adds, "we have seen once used by Layamon, but which here occurs as a mere expletive in every page."\* In fact, however, the use of this word is, by no means, a peculiarity in the honest monk, since it occurs in Layamon, in the present poem, and would be found, no doubt, in other productions of that age if we had them to consult: neither is it ever once an *expletive*; and that this ingenious but rapid writer, did not perfectly understand his own objection is evident from his having quoted a single passage in which it is neither odd nor peculiar, nor strange, nor expletive, but is merely a vulgar substitution of the accusative *me*, instead of the nominative *I*; a vulgar corruption common enough at this day. *Me*, in fact, as most frequently and certainly used by Robert of Gloucester, as well as by Layamon, and in the above text, means nothing more nor less than *men*, as could be proved from a hundred citations; but will be sufficiently so from Hearne's glossary:—"ME, *men, me, i, to me, my*; ME CLUPETH, *men call*; ME BERE, *men carried*; ME NOM, *men took*; ME NOT, *men know not*; ME SEITH, *men say*."

† Gudred's daughter, in the original, is named Lenburc, whom he there offers a wife to Horn, who politely declines the gift, as being engaged to one of his own condition, the daughter of a vavasour in Britain; a refusal which the king deems proper to a madman.

\* Specimens, I, 104.

Rymenild wes in Westnesse,  
 With muchel sorewenesse, 930  
 A kyng ther wes aryve,  
 Ant wolde hyre han to wyve,  
 At one were the kynges  
 Of that weddyngge,  
 The dayes were so sherte,  
 Ant Rymenild ne derste  
 Latten on none wyse ;  
 A wryt hue dude devyse,  
 Athulf hit dude wryte,  
 That Horne ne lovede nout lyte. 940  
 Hue sende hire sonde  
 Into everuche londe,  
 To sechen Horn knyhte,  
 Wher so cr\* me myhte.  
 Horn thereof nout herde,  
 Til o day that he ferde  
 To wode forté shete,  
 A page he gan mete,†  
 Horn seide, Leve fere,  
 Whet dest thou nou here ? 950  
 “Sire, in lutel spelle,  
 Y maye the sone telle ;  
 Ich seche, from Westnesse,  
 Horn knyht of Estnesse,  
 For Rymenild, that feyre may,  
 Soreweth for him nyht and day ;  
 A kyng hire shal wedde,  
 A Sonneday to bedde ;  
 Kyng Mody of Reynis,  
 That is Hornes enimis. 960  
 Ich habbe walked wyde,  
 By the sec side,  
 Ne mihte ich him never cleche,  
 With nones kunnes speche ;

\* Original reading : *Wheso er.*

† Instead of a page, we have, in the French fragment, a palmer or pilgrim (*un palmer pelerin*), in fact, the son of Herlant, his foster-father, and his name turns out to be Jocerant. He gives him an account of the treachery of Wikele, and the intended marriage of Rimel, the daughter of Hunlaf, to the king of Fenoie or Fenice, afterward named Modun.



Ne may ich of him here,  
 In londe fer no nere ;  
 Weylawey the while !  
 Him may hente gyle.  
 Horn hit herde with caren,  
 Ant spec with wete tearen : 970  
 So wel, grom, the bitide,  
 Horn stond bi thi syde ;  
 Aycyn to Rymenild turne,  
 And sey that hue ne murne ;  
 Y shal be ther bitime,  
 A Sonneday er prime.  
 The page wes wel blythe,  
 And shipe wel suythe ;  
 The see him gon adrynke,  
 That Rymenil may of thinke, 980  
 The him con ded ththrowe  
 Under hire chambre wowe.\*  
 Rymenild lokede wide,  
 By the see syde,  
 Yef heo seye Horn come,  
 Other tidyng of eny gome ;  
 Tho fond hue hire sonde  
 Adronque by the stronde,  
 That shulde Horn brynge,  
 Hire hondes gon hue wrynge. 990  
 Horn com to Thurston the kyng,†  
 Ant told him thes tidyng ;  
 Ant tho he was biknowe,  
 That Rymenild wes ys owe ;  
 Ant of his gode kenne,  
 The kyng of Sudenne :  
 Ant hou he sloh afelde  
 Him that is fader aquelde ;  
 Ant seide, Kyng, so wyse,  
 Yeld me my service, 1000  
 Rymenild help me to wynne,  
 Swythe that thou ne blynne,

\* *Conjectural emendation* : windowe.

† This interview takes place in the French fragment ; which gives the king's speech, and the suppliant's harangue, at great length. His name is, there, not Thurston, but Gudred or Guddrec.

Ant y shal do to house  
 Thy dohter wel to spouse,  
 For hue shal to spouse have  
 Athulf my gode felawe ;  
 He is knyht mid the beste,  
 And on of the treweste.  
 The kyng seide so stille,  
 Horn, do al thi wille.  
 He sende tho by sonde,  
 Yend al is londe,  
 After knyhtes to fyhte,  
 That wer men so lyhte ;  
 To him come ynowe,  
 That in to shipe drowe.

1010

Horn dude him in the weye,  
 In a gret galeye ;  
 The wynd bigon to blowe  
 In a lutel throwe ;  
 The see bigan with ship to gon,  
 To Westnesse hem brohte anon,  
 Hue stricken seyl of maste,  
 Ant ancre gonnen caste.  
 Matynes were yronge,  
 And the masse ysonge,  
 Of Rymenild the yynge,  
 Ant of Mody the kyng ;  
 Ant Horn wes in watere,  
 Ne mihte he come no latere.†  
 He let is ship stonde,  
 Ant com him up to londe,  
 His folk he made abyde‡  
 Under a wode syde.

1020

1030

Horn code forh al onc,  
 So he sprong of the stone,  
 On palmere he ymette,§

\* *Knave* would have done better as a rhyme.

† Because, had he come later, he would have come too soon. This seems to be the meaning.

‡ So in the French fragment—

“Bois avoit environ ou einz sunt enbuschez

Ki trestuz les coveri quil ne furent avisee.”—Fo. 72.

§ This adventure is also in the original, fo. 72—

“En sa voie encontra un paumer penant.”

And with wordes hyne grette :  
 Palmere, thou shalt me telle,  
 He seyde, of thine spelle, 1040  
 So brouke thou thi croune,  
 Why comest thou from toune ?  
 Ant he seide on is tale,  
 Y come from a brudale,  
 From brudale wylde  
 Of maide Remenylde ;  
 Ne mihte huc nout dreye,  
 That hue ne wep with eye.  
 Hue seide that hue nolde  
 Be spoused with golde, 1050  
 Hue hade hosebonde,  
 Thah he were out of londe.  
 Ich wes in the halle,  
 Withinne the castel-walle,  
 Away y gon glide,  
 The dole y nolde abyde ;  
 Ther worth a dole reuly,  
 The brude wepeth bitterly.  
 Quoth Horn, so Crist me rede,\*

\* A similar exchange occurs in the copy of *Sir Orpheo*, in the Auchinleck Manuscript (No. lii.), which will be found in a note on the poem of the same title hereafter printed.

In "The noble hystory of the moost excellent and myghty prynce, and hygh renoumed knyght, kynge Ponthus of Galyce, [and the fayre Sydoine, daughter of the kynge] of lytell Brytayne, Enprynted at London in Flete strete at the sygne of the sonne by Wynkyn de Worde, In the yere of our lord god, M.ccccc.xi," 4to, b. l. fig. L. 6 : is this passage : "And as he [Ponthus] rode he met with a poore palmer, beggyng his brede, the whiche had his gowne all to-clouted, and an olde pyllled hatte ; so, he alyght, and sayd to the palmer, Frende, we shall make a chaunge of all our garmentes, for ye shall have my gowne, and i shall have yours and your hatte. A, syr, sayd the palmer, ye bourde you with me. In good fayth, sayd Ponthus, i do not. So he dyspoyled hym and cladde hym with all his rayment, an l he put upon hym the poore mannes gowne, his gyrdell, his hosyn, his shone, his hatte, and his bourdon."

In the ancient poem of "Robyn Hode and the potter" they change clothes in the same manner (see *Robin Hood*, London, T. Egerton, 1795, l. 86), as the former does again, in the ballad of his "rescuing the widows three sons from the sheriff when going to be executed" (II, 153).

"Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,  
 With a link, a down, and a day,  
 And there he met with a silly old palmer,  
 Was walking along the highway.

We wolleth chaunge wede ;  
 Tac thou robe myne,  
 Ant ye slaveyn \* thyne.  
 To day y shal ther drynke  
 That summe hit shal of thynke.  
 Slaveyn he gon down legge,  
 And Horn hit dude on rugge,  
 Ant toc Hornes clothes,  
 That nout him were lothe.  
 Horn toc bordoun and scrippe,  
 Ant gan to wringe is lippe,  
 He made foule chere,  
 And bicollede is swere ;

1060

1070

\* \* \* \* \*

“Come change thy apparel with me, old man,  
 Come change thy apparel for mine ;  
 Here is forty shillings in good silver,  
 Go drink it in beer or wine.”

“Oh thine apparel is good, he said,  
 And mine is ragged ;  
 Wherever you go, wherever you ride,  
 Laugh ne’er an old man to scorn.

“Come change thy apparel with me, old churl,  
 Come change thy apparel with mine ;  
 Here are twenty pieces of good broad gold,  
 Go feast thy brethren with wine.”

He, elsewhere, changes clothes with an old woman. (See *Robin Hood and the bishop*, II, 19.)

\* A slaveyn seems to have been the coarse frock of a palmier or pilgrim. It is said in *Syr Orpheus*, V. 221 :

“Alle his kyndam he forsoke,  
 And to him a *slaveyn* anon he toke.”

Again, V. 328 :

“His slaveyn dede he on his bak.”

Thus, too, in *The chronicle of Engleland*, V. 33 :

“Scheth he heden as hors gret,  
 That beren wolle ase her of get,  
 Thereof hy madem hem *slaveyns*,  
 Ase *palmers* that beth *paynys*.”

Cotgrave, referring from Slavine to Esclavine, or Esclanime, describes it as “a long and thicke riding cloake to bear off the raine ; a pilgrims cloake, or mantle ; a cloake for a traveller ; a sea gowne ; a coarse, high collered, and short-sleeved gowne, reaching downe to the midleg, and used most by sea-nen, and saylers.”

He com to the gateward,<sup>‡</sup>  
 That him onsuerede froward  
 Horn bed undo wel softe,  
 Moni tyme ant ofte,  
 Ne myhte he ywinne,  
 Forto come therynne.  
 Horn the wyket puste,  
 That hit open fluste, 1080  
 The porter shulde abugge,  
 He threw him adoun the brugge,\*  
 That the ribbes crakede.  
 Horn to halle rakede,  
 Ant sette him doun wel lowe,  
 In the beggeres rowe.  
 He lokede aboute,  
 Myd is collede snoute,  
 Ther seh he Rymenild sitte,  
 Ase hue were out of wytte, 1090  
 Wepinde sore ;  
 Ah he seh no wer thore  
 Athulf is gode selawe,  
 That trewe wes in uch plawe.  
 Athulf wes o tour ful heh,  
 To loke fer and eke neh,  
 After Hornes comynge,<sup>‡</sup>  
 Yef water him wolde brynge ;  
 The see he seh flowe,  
 Ah Horn no wer rowe, 1100  
 He seyde on is songe,  
 Horn thou art to longe ;  
 Rymenild thou me bitoke,  
 That ich hire shulde loke,  
 Ich have yloked evere,  
 And thou ne comest nevere.  
 Rymenild ros of benche†  
 The beer al forté shenche,

\* His treatment of the porter is much the same in the original :—

“ Sur le pont le jeta el parfund des paluz.”

† Much circumstantial narrative, in the original, is here omitted : but the following passage seems to be the one alluded to ; though too long to cite entire :—

“ En la butelrie Rimel apres coe entrée  
 Un corn prist grant dunt la liste est gemmée,

After mete in sale,  
 Bothe wyn and ale ; 1116  
 An horn hue ber an honde,  
 For that wes lawe of londe.  
 Hue dronc of the beere,  
 To knyht and skyere ;  
 Horn set at grounde,  
 Him thohte he wes ybounde,  
 He seide, Quene, so hende,  
 To me hydeward thou wende,  
 Thou shench \* us with the vurste,  
 The beggares bueth afurste, 1120  
 Hyre horn hue leyde adoune,  
 Ant fulde him of the broune,  
 A bolle of a galoun,  
 Hue wende he were a glotoun.  
 Hue seide, Tac the coppe,  
 Ant drync this ber al uppe ;  
 Ne sch y never, y wene,  
 Beggare so kene.  
 Horn toc hit hise yfere,  
 Ant seide, Quene, so dere, 1130  
 No beer nullich ibite,  
 Bote of coppe white ;

Kentur la bouche est bien demi pie lée,  
 Si est dor Affricain, à merveille bien overée.  
 De piment lad empli beivre ke bien agréé,  
 A sun dru le porta cum est la costumée,  
 E les autres ensement od vessele dorrée,  
 Servent al manger en la sale curtinée  
 Katre turs unt ja fait ke ne sunt arestée,  
 De ci ke vint al quint ke Horn la alisachée,  
 Al trespas kele fist par la mance orfreisee  
 Puis li a en riant tele parole mustree."

Then he recommends it to her, for the love of God, to be good to the poor, and give somewhat to himself and his companions ; upon which, after returning a pretty answer, she fetches a family cup of great value, replenished with wine, and sets it before Horn ; who, to her astonishment, refuses either to drink, or to restore the cup. He then discovers himself, in an obscure and equivocal manner, and proposes that each should drink half the wine. Once more she delivers to him the cup, into which he drops a ring, which, on drinking her part, she receives in her mouth, and knows to be that which she had formerly given to Dan Horn ; and here ends this curious fragment.

\* Original reading : *shenk*.

Thou wenest ich be a beggere,  
 Y wis icham a fysshere,\*  
 Wel fer come by weste,  
 To seche mine beste ;  
 Min net lyht her wel hende,  
 Withinne a wel feyr pende ;  
 Ich have leye there,  
 Nou is this the sevethe yere ; 1140  
 Icham icome to loke,  
 Yef eny fyssh hit toke ;  
 Yef eny fyssh is therinne,  
 Ther of thou shalt wyne ;  
 For icham come to fyssh,  
 Drynke nully of dyssh :  
 Drynke to Horn of horne,  
 Wel fer ich have yorne,  
 Rymenild him gan bihelde,  
 Hire hert fel to kelde ; 1150  
 Ne kneu hue noht is fysshing,  
 Ne him selve nothyng :

\* Nothing of this is in the original, at least in Horn's conversation with Rimel. He only says to her—

"Bele, sachez de si joe fu jadis customer  
 Ke plus riches vessens me soleit Rom apoter."

Modun takes him for a minstrel, who had come to perform on his tabour at the marriage :—

"Ali piert quil est las un lecheur,  
 Ki a ces noces vient pur juer od tabur."

He, however, afterward tells that monarch—

"Jadis servi ci un home de grant valor,  
 Dirai vus mun mester, joe fus un pescur.  
 Une rey ke joi bone est a tel labur,  
 En une ewe la mis peiscuns prendre a un jur.  
 Pres sunt seth anz alez ke ne fis ca retur,  
 Ore sui ca venuz sin er regardeur.  
 Si ele pescuns ad pris james naveru mamur,  
 E si uncore sanz ec dunc en erc porteur."

The final word appears in the manuscript with a small l ; but what its precise meaning is has not been discovered : the context is, that Rimenild sought after knives to slay with her [therewith] the king, and herself both : but the king's name was not Lothe but Mody. The construction would be scarcely less violent, that though she were determined to kill the king at the same time with herself, she was loth to do it.

Ah wonder hire gan thynke,  
Why for Horn he bed drynke.  
Hue fulde the horn of wyne,  
Ant dronk to that pelryne.  
Hue seide, Dryne thi felle,  
And seththen thou me telle,  
Yef thou Horn ever seye,  
Under wode-leye. 1160  
Horn dronc of horn astounde,  
Ant threu is ryng to grounde,  
Ant seide, Quene, thou thench  
What y threu in the drench.  
The quene eode to boure,  
Mid hire maidnes foure,  
Hue fond that hue wolde,  
The ryng ygraved of golde,  
That Horn of hire hedde,  
Fol sore hyre adredde 1170  
That Horn ded were,  
For his ryng was there,  
Tho sende hue a damoisele,  
After thilke palmere :  
Palmere, quoth hue, so trewe,  
The ryng that thou yn threwe,  
Thou sey wer thou hit nome,  
Ant hyder hou thou come.  
He seyde, By seint Gyle,  
Ich eode mony a myle, 1180  
Wel fer yent by weste,  
To seche myne beste ;  
Mi mete forté bydde,  
For so me tho bitidde  
Ich fond Horn Knyht stonde  
To shipeward at stronde,  
He seide he wolde gesse  
To aryve at Westnesse ;  
The ship nom into flode  
With me and Horn the gode ; 1190  
Horn bygan be sek and deye,  
And for his love me preye  
To gon with the rynge,  
To Rymenild the yynge,



Wel ofte he hyne keste.  
 Crist yeve is soule reste !  
 Rymenild seide at the firste,  
 Herte nou to berste !  
 Horn worth be no more,  
 That haveth the pyned sore. 1200  
 Hue fel adoun a bedde,  
 And after knyves gredde,  
 To slein mide hire kyng Lothe,\*  
 And hire selve bothe,  
 Withinne thilke nyhte,  
 Come yef Horn ne myhte.  
 To herte knyf hue sette,  
 Horn in is armes hire kepte,  
 His shurte-lappe he gan take,  
 And wypede away the foule blake 1210  
 That wes upon his fuere ;  
 Ant seide, Luef so dere,  
 Ne const thou me yknowe ?  
 Ne am ich Horn thyn owe ?  
 Ich Horn of Westnesse,  
 In armes thou me kesse.  
 Yclupten and kyste  
 So longe so hem lyste.  
 Rymenild, quoth he, ich wende  
 Doun to the wodes ende, 1220  
 For ther bueth myne knyhte,  
 Worthi men and lyhte,  
 Armed under clothe ;  
 Hue shule make wrothe,  
 The kyng and hise gestes,  
 That bueth at thise festes.  
 To-day ychulle huem cacche,  
 Nou ichulle huem vacche.  
 Horn sprong out of halle,  
 Ys brunie he let falle ; 1230

\* The final word appears in the manuscript *lo the*; but what its precise meaning is has not been discovered; the context is, that Rimenild sought after knives to slay with her [therewith] the king, and herself both: but the king's name was not Lothe by Mody. The construction would be scarcely less violent, that though she was determined to kill the king at the same time with herself, she was loth to do it.

Rymenild code of boure,  
 Athulf hue fond loure :  
 "Athulf, be wel blythe,  
 Ant to Horn go swythe,  
 He is under wode-bowe,  
 With felawes ynowe."  
 Athulf gon forth \* springe,  
 For that ilke tydyng,  
 Efter Horn he ernde,  
 Him thohte is herte bernde, 1240  
 He oftok him, y wisse,  
 And custe him with blysse.  
 Horn tok is preye,  
 And dude him in the weye,  
 Hue comen in wel sone,  
 The yates weren undone,  
 Yarmed suite thicke,  
 From fote to the nycke.  
 Alle that ther evere weren,  
 Withoute is true feren, 1250  
 Ant the kyng Aylmare,  
 Y wis he hade muche care,  
 Monic that ther sete,  
 Hure lyf hy gonne lete.  
 Horn understanding ne hede  
 Of Fykeles falssede,  
 Hue suoren alle, ant seyde,  
 That hure non him wreyede,  
 Ant suore othes holde,  
 That huere non ne sholde 1260  
 Horn never bytreye,  
 Thah he on dethe leye.  
 Ther hy ronge the belle,  
 That wedlak to fulfulle,  
 Hue wenden hom with eyse,  
 To the kynges paleyse,  
 Ther wes the brudale suete,  
 For richemen ther ete ;  
 Telle ne mihte no tonge  
 The gle that ther was songe. 1270  
 Horn set in chayere,  
 And bed hem alle yhere :

---

\* Original reading : *froth*.

He seyde, Kyng of londe,  
 Mi tale thou understonde :  
 Ich wes ybore in Sudenne,  
 Kyng wes mi fader of kenne ;  
 Thou me to knyhte hove,  
 Of knyhtod habbe y prove ;  
 Thou dryve me out of thi lond,  
 And seydest ich wes traytour strong ; 1280  
 Thou wendest that ich wrohte  
 That y ner ne thohte,  
 By Rymenild forté lygge,  
 Y wys ich hit withsugge,  
 Ne shal ich hit ner agynne  
 Er ich Sudenne wyne ;  
 Thou kep hyre me astounde,  
 The while that ich founde  
 Into myn heritage,  
 With this Yrisshe page, 1290  
 That lond ichulle thorchreche,  
 And do mi fader wreche ;  
 Ychul be kyng of toune,  
 And lerne kynges rounne:  
 Then shal Rymenild the yinge  
 Ligge by Horn the kyng.

Horn gan to shipe drawe,  
 With hyse Yrisshe felawe,  
 Athulf with him his brother,  
 He nolde habbe non other. 1300  
 The ship bygan to cronde,  
 The wynd bleu wel londe,  
 Withinne dawes fyve,  
 The ship bigan aryve,  
 Under Sudennes side,\*  
 Huere ship by gon to ryde.

---

\* Horn has just arrived in this ship, from Westnesse, it would seem, where he has been married to Rymenild ; and, in an address to king Aylmer, her father, says, in answer to an old calumny that he had attempted to lie with his daughter,

“Y wys ich hit with sugge,  
 Ne shal ich hit ner agynne  
 Er ich *Sudenne* wyne ;  
 Thou kep hyre me astounde,  
 The while that ich sounde,  
 Into my *heritage*.”

Aboute the midnyhte  
 Horn code wel rihte,  
 He nom Athulf by honde,  
 And ede up to londe ; 1310  
 Hue fonden under shelde,  
 A knyht liggunde on felde,  
 O the shelde wes ydrawe,  
 A croyz of Jhesu Cristes lawe,  
 The knyght hym lay on slape,  
 In armes wel yshape,  
 Horn him gan ytake,  
 And seide, Knyht, awake ;  
 Thou sei me whet thou kepest,  
 And here whi thou slepest ; 1320  
 Me thinkes by crois liste,  
 That thou levest on Criste,  
 Bote thou hit wolle shewe,  
 My suerd shal the to hewe.  
 The gode knyght up aros,  
 Of Hornes wordes him agros :  
 He seide ich servy ille,  
 Paynes to-yeynes mi wille :  
 Ich wes Cristene sum while,  
 Ycome into this yle, 1330  
 Sarazynes lothe and blake,  
 Me made Jhesu forsake,  
 To loke this passage,  
 For Horn that is of age,  
 That woneth her by-weste,  
 God knyht mid the beste,  
 Hue slowe mid huere honde  
 The kyng of thisse londe,  
 Ant with him mony honder,  
 Therfore me thuncheth wonder 1340

He is now arrived, in a ship, "under Sudennes side." He, afterward, tells the knight, Athulf's father,

"Icham icode into *Sudenne*,  
 With fele Yrisshe-menne."

So that, it is evident, that the poet has either, in some places, confounded the two kingdoms of Westnesse and Sudene (or Britain) with each other ; or, in others, has split that of Sudene, otherwise Westnesse, into two.

That he ne cometh to fyhte,  
God yeve him the myhte  
That wynd him hider dryve,  
To don hem alle of lyve,  
And slowen kyng Mury,  
Horn es com es mon hardy.  
Horn of lond hue senten,  
Tuelf children with him wenten,  
With hem wes Athulf the gode,  
Mi child, my oun fode. 1350  
Yef Horn is hol ant sounde,  
Athulf tit no wounde,  
He lovede Horn with mihte,  
And he him with ryhte ;  
Yef y myhte se hem tueye,  
Thenne ne nohte i forté deye.  
“Knyht, be thenne blythe,  
Mest of alle sythe,  
Athulf and Horn is fere,  
Both we beth here.” 1360  
The knyht to Horn gan skippe,  
And in his armes clippe  
Much joye hue maden yfere,  
Tho hue to gedere ycome were.  
He saide, with stevene thare,  
Yungemen, hou habbe ye yore yfare?  
Woll ye this lond wyne,  
And wonie thereynne ?  
He seid, Sucte Horn child,  
Yet lyveth thy moder Godyld? 1370  
Of joie hue ne miste  
Olyve yef hue the wiste.  
Horn seide, on is ryme,  
Yblessed be the time,  
Icham icome into Sudenne,  
With fele Yrisshemenne,  
We shule the houndes kecche,  
And to the deye vecche ;  
Ant so we shulen hem teche  
To speken our speche. 1380  
Horn gan is horn blowe,  
Is folk hit con yknowe,

Hue comen out of hurne,  
 To Horn swythe yurne ;  
 Hue smiten, and hue fyhten,  
 The niht and eke the ohtoun ;  
 The Sarazyns hue slowe,  
 Ant summe quike to drowe,  
 Mid speres ord hue stonge,  
 De the olde and eke the yonge. 1390

Horn lette sone wurchen,  
 Bothe chapel and chyrche ;  
 He made belle rynge,  
 Ant prestes masse synge ;  
 He sohte is moder halle,  
 In the roche walle ;  
 He custe hire ant grette,  
 Ant into the castel sette  
 Croune he gan werie,  
 Ant make feste merye, 1400  
 Murie he ther wrohite,  
 Ah Rymenild hit abohte.

The whiles Horn wes oute  
 Fikenild ferde abonte,  
 The betere forté spede,  
 The riche he yef mede,  
 Bothe yonge ant olde,  
 With him forté holde ;  
 Ston he dude lade,  
 Ant lym therto he made, 1410  
 Castel he made sette,  
 With waterre by flette,  
 That theryn come ne myhte,  
 Bote foul with flyhte,  
 Bote when the see withdrowe  
 Ther mihte come ynowe.  
 Ther Fykenild gon by wende,  
 Rymenild forté shende,  
 To wyve he gen hire yerne,  
 The kyng ne durst him werne, 1420  
 Ant habbeth set the day  
 Fykenild to wedde the may ;  
 Wo was Rymenild of mode,  
 Terres hue wepte of blode.

Thilke nyhte Horn suete  
Con wel harde mete  
Of Rymenild his make,  
That into shipe wes take,  
The ship gon overblenche  
Is lemmon shulde adrenche. 1430  
Rymenild mid hire honde  
Swymme wolde to londe,  
Fykenild ayeyn hire pylte,  
Mid his suerdes hylte.  
Horn awek in is bed,  
Of his lemmon he wes adred ;  
Athulf, he seide, felawe,  
To shipe nou we drawe ;  
Fykenild me hath gon under,  
Ant do Rymenild sum wonder. 1440  
Crist, for his wondes fyve,  
To nyhte thider us dryve !  
Horn gone to shipe ride,  
His knyhtes bi his side,  
The ship bigon to sture,  
With wynd god of cure,  
Ant Fykenild, her the day springe,  
Sende to the kynge,  
After Rymenild the bryhte,  
Ant spousesde hyre by nyhte, 1450  
He ladde hire by derke.  
Into his newe werke,  
The feste huc bigonne  
Er then aryse the sonne.  
Hornes ship at stod in stoure,  
Under Fykenildes boure,  
Nuste Horn alyve  
Wher he wes aryve,  
Thene castel huc ne knewe,  
For he was so newe. 1460  
The see bigon to withdrawe,  
Tho seh Horn his felawe,  
The feyre knyht Arnoldyn,  
That wes Athulfes cosyn,  
That ther set in that tyde  
Kyng Horn to abyde.

He seide, Kyng Horn, kyngesone,  
 Hider thou art welcome,  
 To-day hath sire Fykenild  
 Yweddeth thi wif Rymenild, 1470  
 White the nou this while,  
 He haveth do the gyle;  
 This tour he dude make,  
 Al for Rymenildes sake;  
 Ne may ther comen ynne  
 No mon with na gynne.  
 Horn, nou Crist the wisse,  
 Rymenild that thou ne misse!  
 Horn couthe alle the listes  
 That eni mon of wiste. 1480  
 Harpe he gon shewe,  
 Ant toc him to felawe,  
 Knyhtes of the beste  
 That he ever hede of weste,  
 Onen o the sherte,  
 Hue gurdun huem with suerde,  
 Hue coden on the gravele  
 Towart the castele,  
 Hue gonne muric singe,  
 And makeden huere gleyng; 1490  
 That Fykenild mihte y-here,  
 He axede who hit were.  
 Men seide hit were harperis,  
 Jogelers, ant fythelers.  
 Hem ne dude in lete,  
 At halle dore hue sete.  
 Horn sette him abenche,  
 Is harpe he gan clenche;  
 He made Rymenild a lay,  
 Ant hue seide weylaway! \* 1500

\* A lay, as before observed, is generally an amorous, tender, and elegiac song. He seems, on this occasion, to be acting the part of a minstrel.

The interjection of sorrow, *weil-a-way*, which Mr. Tyrwhitt found variously orthographised in the MSS. of Chaucer, he uniformly spells *walawa* conformably to its Saxon etymology, which was not only inexcusable, but inconsistent with his own practice, as a MS. is very rarely uniform in its orthography. It seems to have been the burden of some ancient popular song. Thus, in the *Coventry play*, Abraham says to Isaac—

"Thy meekenes, childe, makes me afreay,  
 My songe maye be *waille-a-waye*."



Rymenild fel yswowe,  
Tho nes ther non that lowe,  
Hit smot Horn to herte,  
Sore con him smerte.  
He lokede on is rynge,  
Ant o Rymenild the yynge,  
He eode up to borde,  
Mid his god suorde ;  
Fykenildes croune  
He fel ther adoune,  
Ant alle is menne arowe,  
He dude adoun throwe,  
Ant made Arnolydn kyng there,  
After kyng Aylmere,  
To be kyng of Westnesse,  
For his mildnesse ;  
The kyng ant is baronage  
Yeven him truage.  
Horn toc Rymenild by honde,

1510

Ant ladde hire to stronde,  
Ant toc with him Athelbrus,  
The gode stiward of hire fader hous.  
The see bigan to flowen,  
Ant hy faste to rowen,  
Hue aryveden under reme  
In a wel feyr streme ;  
Kyng Mody wes kyng in that lond,  
That Horn sloh with is hond,  
Athelbrus he made ther kyng,  
For his gode techyng,  
For sire Hornes lore  
He wes mad kyng thore.  
Horn eode to ryve,

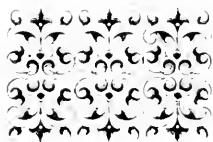
1520

1530

The wynd him con wel dryve,  
He aryvede in Yrlonde,  
Ther Horn wo couthe er fonde ;  
He made ther Athulf chyld  
Wedde mayden Ermenyld ;

Ant Horn com to Sudenne,  
To is oune kenne ;  
Rymenild he made ther is queene,  
So hit myhte bene.  
In trewe love hue lyveden ay,  
Ant wel hue loveden godes lay :  
Nou hue beoth bothe dede,  
Crist to hevene us leode !

1540





## THE KYNG OF TARS.

---

THIS pious legend is taken out of an immense folio in the Bodleian library, known by the title of *Manuscript Vernon*, being a present from Edward Vernon, Esq., formerly of Trinity College, who commanded a company for the king in the civil wars, and in whose family it appears to have been for many years. The writing is apparently of the fourteenth century.

Another copy, of equal, if not greater, antiquity, but imperfect at the end, is preserved in the Auchinleck MS. in the Advocates' library, Edinburgh. Scarcely two lines together are exactly like ; but it is not, upon the whole, a better copy, except as it, in one place, supplies an omission.

The title of the Bodleian MS. is in rhyme :

“Her bigenneth of the kyng of Tars,  
And of the soudan of Dammas ;\*  
How the soudan of Dammas  
Was icristned thoru godes grace.”

That it has been translated from the French is evident from the poet's repeated references to his original :

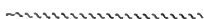
“ In stori as we rede,  
As ich finde in my sawe.”

---

\* Damas is Damascus, and Tars, Thrace. See Bishop Douglas's *Virgil*, and Ruddiman's *Glossary*.



THE KYNG OF TARS;  
AND THE  
SOUDAN OF DAMMAS.



HERKNETH now, bothe olde and yying,  
For Maries love, that swete thyng,

How a werre bigan  
Bitwene a god Cristene kyng,  
And an hethene heyhe lordyng  
Of Damas the soudan.

The kyng of Taars hedde a wyf,  
The feireste that mighte bere lyf,  
That eny mon telle can ;  
A doughter thei hadde hem bitween,  
That heore rihte heir scholde ben,\*  
White so fether of swan.

10

Chaast heo was and feir of chere,  
With rode red so blosme on brere,  
Eyyen stepe and graye,  
With lowe schuldres, and whyte swere,  
Hire to seo was gret preyere

Of princes pert in play.  
The word of hire sprong ful wyde  
Feor and ner, bi uche a syde,

20

The soudan herde say,  
Him thoughte his herte wolde breke on five  
Bot he mihte have hire to wyve,  
That was so feir a may.

\* The Edinburgh MS. reads—

“Non fairer woman mizt ben,”

and contains variations, more or less important, in almost every line.

The soudan ther he sat in halle,  
He sente his messagers faste withalle  
    To hire fader the kyng,  
And seide hou so hit ever bifalle,  
That maide he wolde clothe in palle,  
    And spousen hire with his ryng : \* 30  
“And elles i swere, withouten fayle,  
And schul hire winnen in pleyn batayle,  
    With mony an heih lordyng.”  
The messagers ben forth iwent,  
To don heor lordes comaundement,  
    Withouten eny dwellyng.

Whon the kyng this understood,  
For wraththe neih he waxeth wood,  
    And seyde al in his sawe,  
Be hym that dyed on the rod, 40  
Rather wolde i spille my blod,  
    And in batayle ben slawe ;  
And al the lond that is myn,  
Ar heo scholde wedde a Sarazyn,  
    The devil him er to drawe ;  
But heo wolde bi hire goode wille  
Wend to him hireself to spille,  
    Hire thoughtes nouht i knawe.

That schul ye witen ar ye pase.  
His doughter com forth in that place, 50  
    Tofore hire fader blyve.  
Doughter, he seide, the soudan of Damas  
Desyreth for to seo thi fas,  
    And have the to wyve.  
Doughter wolt thou for eny tresour  
Forsake Crist ur saveour,  
    That soffrede woundes fyve ?  
The mayde onswerde, with mylde mood,  
To hire fader ther he stod,  
    Nay, lord, so mot i thryve. 60

---

\* Original reading : *ryg*.

Jhesu, that dyyed on the tree,  
 Let me nevere that day isce  
     A tiraunt for to take.  
 For Marie love that mayden free,  
 O god and persones threo,  
     Arst yif him wan and wrake.  
 Doughtur, he seide, beo now stille,  
 Thow schalt never be weddet him tille  
     For bost that he con make ;  
 I schal him seende such wordes to seyn,  
 That al his thought schal turne to veyn,  
     For thou hast him forsake.

70

Bi theos same messagers,  
 That cometh from the soudan fers,  
     Theos wordes to him he sent :  
 Heo nolde not leeven on his mancers,  
 To god heo made hire preyers,  
     That lord omnipotent ;  
 And bad him take another thought,  
 For hire ne scholde he wedde nouht,  
     For gold, selver, ne rent.  
 Whon the messagers this herde seyn  
 Soone thei tornede hem ayeyn,  
     And to the soudan went.

80

The Soudan sat at his des,\*  
 Iserved of his furste mes.  
     Thei comen into the halle,  
 Tofore the prince proud in pres,  
 Heore tale thei tolden withouten lees,  
     And on heore knees gunne falle :  
 And seide, Sire, the kyng of Tars  
 Of wikkede wordes nis not scars,  
     Hethene hound he doth the calle,†

90

\* The Edinburgh manuscript reads better—

“ As the soudan sat at his des.”

† That the Christians of former ages entertained an inveterate antipathy to the Mahometans (who, certainly, would not have been much less intolerant) is apparent from the ancient romances of chivalry, French or English, in which this equally polite and religious appellation, frequently occurs. Thus, in *Syr Berys*, that gallant knight, as we learn from the right reverend editor of *The Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, is so full of zeal for his religion, as to return the following message to a

And er his doughter be yive the tille,  
 Thyn herte blod he wod spille,  
 And thi barouns alle.

Whon the soudan this iherde  
 As a wod mon he ferde,  
 His robe he rente adoun,  
 He tar the her of hed and berd, 100  
 And seide he wolde hir wive with swerd,  
 Beo his lord seynt Mahoun.  
 The table adoun riht he smot,  
 In to the flore foot hot,  
 He lokede as a wylde lyon ;  
 Al that he hitte he smot down riht,  
 Both sergaunt and kniht,  
 Erl and eke baroun.

So he ferde forsothe a pliht  
 Al a day and al a niht, 110  
 That no mon mihti hym chaste ;  
 A morwen, whon hit was day-liht,  
 He sent his messagers ful riht  
 After his barouns in haste :<sup>\*</sup>  
 [That thai com to his parlement,  
 For to heren his jugement,  
 Bothe lest and mast ;  
 When the parlement was pleyner,  
 The bispact† the soudan fer,  
 And seyde to hem ‡ in hast :] 120

Paynim king's fair daughter, who had fallen in love with him, and sent two Saracen knights to invite him to her bower—

“ I wyll not ones stirre of this ground,  
 To speke with an hethene hounde :  
 Unchristen houndes, I rede you flee,  
 Or i your harte bloude shal se.”

Indeed, he adds, they return the compliment, by calling him elsewhere “a christen hounde.”

\* This half of the stanza has been borrowed from the Advocates' copy, being omitted in the Oxford one, and being of itself, apparently, not perfectly correct.

† Original reading : *bi epac*.

‡ Original reading : *him*.

Lordynges, he seith, what to rede?

Me is don a gret misdede,

Of Taars the Cristene kyng;

I bed hem bothe lond and lede,

To have his doughter in worthli wede,

And spouse hire with my ryng:

And he seide, withouten fayle,

Arst he wolde me sle in batayle,

And mony a gret lordyng;

Acertes he schal be forswore,

Or to wrote hele that he was bore,

Bote he hit ther to bring.

130

Therefore, lordinges, i have after ow sent,

For to come to my parliment,

To wite of yow counsaile;

And alle onswerde, with good entent,

Thei wolde be at his comaundement

Withouten eny fayle.

And, whon thei were alle at his heste,

The soudan made a wel gret feste,

For love of his batayle;

The soudan gederet an ost unryde,

With Sarazins of muchel pryde,

The kyng of Tars to assaile.

140

Whon the kyng hit herde that tyde

He sente aboute on uche a syde

Alle that he mihte of seende;

Gret werre tho bigon to wrake,

For the mariage ne moste be take

Of that mayden heende.

Batayle thei sette uppon a day,

Withinne the thridde day of May,

No lengor nolde thei leende;

The soudan com with gret power,

With helm briht, and feir baner,

Uppon that kyng to wende.

150

The soudan ladde an huge oft,

And com with muche pruyde and bost,

With the kyng of Tars to fhte,



With hym mony a Sarazin seer, 160  
 Alle the feldes feor and neer  
 Of helmes leomede lihte.  
 The kyng of Tars com also,  
 The soudan batayle for to do,  
 With mony a Cristene kniht;  
 Eyther ost gon other assayle,  
 Ther bigon a strong batayle,  
 That grislych was of siht.

Threo hethene ayein twey Cristene men,  
 And falde hem doun in the fen, 170  
 With wepnnes stif and goode;  
 The steorne Sarazins, in that fiht,  
 Slowe ur Cristene men doun riht,  
 Thei fouhte as heo weore woode.  
 The soudan oft in that stounde  
 Feolde the Cristene to the grounde,  
 Mony a freoly foode;  
 The Sarazins withouten fayle  
 The Cristene culde in that batayle,  
 Nas non that hem withstode. 180

Whon the kyng of Tars sauh that fiht,  
 Wodde he was for wraththe apliht,  
 In hond he hent a spere,  
 And to the soudan he rod ful riht,  
 With a dunt of mucche miht,  
 Adoun he gon him bere.  
 The soudan neigh he hedde islawe,  
 But thritti thousent of hethene lawe,  
 Coomen him for to were,  
 And brouhten him ayeyn uppon his steede, 190  
 And holpe him wel in that nede,  
 That no mon mihte him dere.

Whon he was brouht uppon his stede,  
 He sprong as sparkle doth of glede,  
 For wraththe and for envye;  
 Alle that he hutte he made hem blede,  
 He ferde as he wolde a wede,  
 Mahoun, help! he gan crye.

Mony an helm ther was unweved,  
And mony a bacinet to-cleved,  
    And sadeles mony emptye ;  
Men mihte se uppon the feld  
Moni a kniht ded under scheld,  
    Of the Cristene cumpaignye.

200

Whon the king of Tars saugh hem so ryde,  
No lengor there he nolde abyde,  
    Bote fleyh to his oun cite ;  
The Sarazins that ilke tyde  
Slough adoun bi uche a side  
    Ur Cristene folk so fre.  
The Sarazins that tyme faunz fayle  
Slowe ur Cristene in batayle,  
    That reuthe hit was to se ;  
And on the morwe for heore sake  
Truwes thei gunne togidere take,  
    A moneth and dayes thre.

210

As the king of Tars sat in his halle,  
He made ful gret deol withalle,  
    For the folk that he hedde ilore ;  
His douhter com in riche palle,  
On kneos heo gon biforen him falle,  
    And seide with syking sore :  
Fader, heo seide, let me beo his wyf,  
That ther be no more strif  
    Then hath ben her bifore ;  
For me hath be much folk schent,  
Slawen and morthred, and to-rent,  
    Allas, that i was bore !

220

Fader, ichulle him serve at wille,  
Erli and late, loude and stille,  
    And leeven on god almiht ;  
Bote hit be so he wol the spille,  
And al thi londes take hym tille,  
    In batayle and in fihht.  
Certes, i nul no lengor drye  
That Cristene men schul for me dye,  
    Thorw grace of god almiht ;

230

Then was the kyng of Tars ful wo  
 Anon he onswerde tho  
 To his doughter briht.

Douhter, he seide, blessed thou be  
 Of god that sit in trinitie  
 The tyme that thou were bore,  
 That thou wolt save thi moder and me  
 Thi preyere now i graunte the  
 Of that thou bede before.  
 Fader, heo seide, *pur charite*,  
 And for Crist in trinite,  
 Blyve that ich weore thore,  
 Ar eny more serwe arere, 250  
 That ye ne my moder dere  
 For me beo nought forlore.

The kyng tho, with good entent,  
 In to his chaumbre hath isent  
 Aftur his qween so hende,  
 Whon heo was comen in present,  
 Dame, he seide, ur doughter hath ment \*  
 To the soudan for to weende.  
 Dame, he seid, counseyle me,  
 Her beoth no mo bote we thre 260  
 Icomen of Cristene kende.  
 The qween onswerde, withouten fayle,  
 Therto schal i nevere counsayle  
 Ure douhter for to schende.

Thenne was the doughter wo,  
 Merci heo criyede hire moder tho,  
 With a reuthful stevene:  
 "Moder, hit nis not longe a gon  
 That ther wer for me slon  
 Threo thousent men and sevene; 270  
 And certes i nul no lengor drye  
 That Cristen men schul for me dye,  
 Thorwgh grace of god in hevene."  
 Weore thei wel, weore thei wrothe,  
 The doughter dude overcome hem bothe  
 Beo riht reson and evene.

---

\* Original reading : *mun*t.

Whon thei weoren thus aton

Messengeres he sente anon

To the proude soudan,

To make frendes that weore fon,

280

No mo folk thei wolde slon,

His doughter he graunted him than.

Whon the messagers thus herde seyn

Smartliche thei tornede ayeyn,

To the soudan swart and wan ;

Whon he herde heore lettres rade

Then was he bothe blithe and glad,

And murie as eny man.

And seide, Ichul ben at his wille,

Erly and late, loude and stille,

290

And help him at his neode ;

No mo folk nul i now spille :

The kyng anon he sende tille

And thonkede him of that dede.

The kyng and qwene in chaumbre were tho,

In care and serwe and mucche wo,

In stori as we rede ;

Wel hem was withoute les

That the soudan wolde make pes

With Cristen felaurede.

300

This fel in mid-somer tyde

The soudan nolde no lengor byde,

To the kyng of Tars he sent,

With Sarazins, and with mucche pryde,

With mony a juwel, is nought to huyde,

To make him a present.

Forth thei went that ilke tyde,

To the kyng of Tars thei gan ryde,

That was bothe freo and gent ;

Thei welcomed the messagere,

310

Of gret reuthe ye may here,

Whon thei to chaumbre went.

In chaumbre kyng and qwene was tho,

In serwe and care and mucche wo,

For heore doughter hende ;

Heor doughter can bifore hem go,  
And bad hem bi hire counseil do,  
    To save Cristene kende.  
The doughter ther with wordes stille  
Brought hem bothe in beter wille, 320  
    And in to halle gunne wende,  
And welcomede the messagers,  
That come fro the soudan fers,  
    With wordes feire and hende.

Then seide the qwene after than,  
Hou fareth yor lord the soudan,  
    That is so noble a kniht ?  
The messagers onswere gan,  
He fareth as wel as eny man,  
    And is yor friend apliht. 330  
The qweene onswerde, with mylde mod,  
To the messagers ther thei stod,  
    And swor thenne anon riht,  
Ich fouchesaf on him my blod,  
To him heo nis not to good,  
    Thaugh heo weore ten so briht.

The messagers weore glad and blythe,  
With knihtes fele and stedes stythe  
    Thei brouhte hire to chare ;  
The kyng and qwen weoren unblithe, 340  
Heore sorwe couthe no mon kithe,  
    To seon hire from hem fare.  
Thei seye hit mihte non other go  
The kyng and the qwene also  
    Thei custe heore douhter thare,  
Bitaughten hire god for evermo :  
Hem self ayeyn thei tornede tho,  
    Of blisse thei weore al bare.

Nou lete we of that mournyng,  
And speke we of that maiden ying, 350  
    To the soudan heo is ifare ;  
He come with mony an heigh lordyng  
For to welcome that swete thing  
    Ther heo com in hire chare.

He custe hire wel mony a sithe,  
His joye couthe no mou kithe,  
    Awei was al hire care ;  
In to chaumbre heo was led,  
With riche clothes heo was clede,  
    Hethene as thaugh heo ware.

360

The soudan ther he sat in halle,  
He comaundede his knihtes alle  
    That maiden for to fette ;  
In cloth of riche purpel palle,  
And on hire hed a comeli calle,  
    Bi the soudan heo was sette.  
Unsemely was hit for to se  
Heo that was so briht of ble  
    To habbe so foul a mette,  
Thaugh heo made merthe and solas,  
The serwe at hire herte was,  
    Ne mihte no mon hit lette.

Whon hit com to the niht,  
Leve heo tok that buirde briht,  
    To chaumbre for to wende,  
With hire wente moni an hethen kniht,  
A riche bed ther was idiht  
    For that maiden hende.  
Whon hit was al redi wrought,  
The soudan nolde therin come nouht,  
    For fo ne for frende ;  
But he mihte make that may  
To leeven uppon his false lay,  
    That com of Cristene kende.

380

Ful loth were a Cristene mon  
To ligge bi an hethene wommon,  
    That leevede on false lawe,  
And as loth was thulke soudan  
Thulke maiden for to tan,  
    As ich fynde in my sawe.  
The soudan went to bedde al prest,  
Knihtes and ladyes token heore rest,  
    Folk heo gonne withdrawe ;

390

The mayden no thing ne slepe,  
 But al niht lay and wepe  
 Forté that day gon dawé.

And as heo fel a slepe thore  
 Hir thoughte ther stod hire bifore  
 An hundred houndes blake,  
 And borken on hire lasse and more, 400  
 On ther was that greved hire sore,  
 Awei he wolde hire take.  
 Ac heo ne durste him not smyte,  
 For drede leste he wolde hire byte,  
 Such maystries he gon make ;  
 And as heo wolde awei fle,  
 Hir thoughte ther stode develes thre,  
 Al brennyng as a drake.

So gryslich thei were wrought,  
 Uche of hem a swerd brought, 410  
 And mad hire afert so sore ;  
 On Jhesu Crist was al hire thouht,  
 Therfore thei mihte hire harme nouht,  
 Nouthur lasse ne more.  
 Fro the fendes heo was delyvered sound,  
 But atte laste ther com an hound,  
 With brode brouwes and hore,  
 Almost he hedde hire adoun,  
 But, thorw Cristes passioun,  
 Heo was isaved thore. 420

Yit thouhte\* hire more, withoute lesyng,  
 As heo lay in hire swevenyng,  
 Selcouth hit is to rede,  
 The blake hound, that hire was folewyng,  
 Thorw the miht of hevene kyng,  
 To hire spac in monhede,  
 In whit ermure as a kniht,  
 And seide to hire, My swete wight,  
 Ne dar the no thing drede  
 Of Tirmagaunt ne of Mahoun, 430  
 The lord that soffrede passioun  
 The schal helpe at nede.

\* Original reading: *thougte*.

Whon the mayde was awaked  
 Hire flesch i wis was al aquaked  
 For drede of hire swevenynge,  
 On hire bed heo sat al naked,  
 To Jhesu Crist hire mone heo maked,  
 Al mihtful hevene kyng,  
 As wis as he hire deore bouhte  
 That hire sweuene that heo thouhte  
 Scholde torne to good endynge.  
 Whon the maiden aysen was,  
 A non the soudan of Damas,  
 In to his temple he let hire bringe

440

And seide to that feire may,  
 Thou most leeven uppon my lay,  
 And knele her adoun,  
 Forsake thou most thi false lay,  
 That thou hast leved on mony a day,  
 And leeven on fire Mahoun.  
 Certes, but thou wolt do so,  
 Thie fader and moder ichulle slo,  
 Bi Jovin and Plotoun;\*  
 Bi Mahoun, and bi Tirmagaunt,  
 No mon schal be heore waraunt,  
 Emperour ne kyng with croun.

450

The mayden onswerde, with glad chere,  
 To the soudan as ye may heere,  
 Sire, i nul the no thing greve,  
 Tel me which is youre maneere,  
 So schal i make my preyere,  
 And on yor goddes leeve.  
 To Tirmagaunt ichul me take,  
 And Jhesu Crist ichul forsake,  
 That made Adam and Eve,  
 And serve the, sire, at thi wille,  
 Erli and late, loud and stille,  
 A morwe and eke an eve.

450

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\* "Sire Jovin," a few lines below, is a different deity from "Jubiter," and, as Warton suggests, may mean the Roman Emperor Jovinian, against whom St. Jerome wrote, and whose history is in the *Gesta Romanorum*, C. 59. Plotoun is Pluto.



Then was the soudan glad and blithe,  
 Mahoun he thonkede feole sithe 470  
 That heo was so biknowe;  
 His joyes couthe no mon kithe,  
 He bad hire go about swithe,  
 And cusse his goddes arowe.  
 Furst he custe Appolin,\*  
 Astrot,† and sire Jovin,  
 For drede of worldes awe;  
 In the temple whil heo was ther  
 Of Mahoun and Jubiter  
 Ther heo lernde the lawe. 480

Whon that heo hire lawes couthe  
 Heo seide hem openly with mouthe,  
 Ac Crist foryat he nouht;  
 Wher heo weore bi north or southe  
 Nas munstral non with harpe ne crouthe  
 That ones mihte chaunge hire thought.  
 Evere wende the soudan niht and day,  
 Heo hedde ilceved on his lay,  
 And yit he was bicaht;  
 Whon heo was hire self alone 490  
 To Jhesu Crist heo made hire mone  
 That al this world hath wrought.

The soudan for hire love that tyde  
 Let criye on his lond bi uch a syde  
 A turnament to take;  
 The strengest that mihte on hors ryde,  
 He dubbede hem with mucche pryde,  
 And knihtes he let hem make.

---

\* Apollo. "*Quel dieu,*" says a Saracen to Joseph of Arimathea, "*croyez vous? Nous ne avons que quatre dieux, Mahom, Tervagant, Apolin, et Jupin.*" (*Lancelot du lac*, tome 2, fo. 46.) One of these Saracen deities occurs in *Syr Beuys*:—

"And if thou wylt thy god forsake,  
 And to *Apolyne*, our god the betake," &c.

† Ashtaroth, the goddess of the Zidonians, occasionally worshipped by the children of Israel. See 1 Kings xi., 5, 33.

Trompors gunne heore bemes blowe,  
The knihtes riden out on a rowe, 500  
    On stedes white and blake ;  
Anon rihte also swithe,  
Stronge men gon maystries kithe  
    For that maidenenes sake.

The mayden and the soudan,  
In a tour thei leyen than,  
    The turnament to biholde ;  
When the turnament bigon  
Ther was a semblet mony a mon,  
    Of Sarazins stout and bolde. 510  
Heo leyden on as heo weore wode,  
With swerdes and with maces goode,  
    Knihtes yonge and olde ;  
So thei foughte with egre mood,  
Of heore bodies ran the blod,  
    In tale as hit is tolde.

Mony an helm ther was unweved,  
And bacinettes al to drevd,  
    And knihtes icast to grounde ;  
And summe played of the heved, 520  
And summe heore scolles icleved,  
    With serwe thei weore unsounde.  
So laste the turnement apliht,  
Fro the morwe to the niht,  
    Ther yeven was moni a wounde :  
A morwe the soudan wedded that may  
In the maner of his lay,  
    In stori as hit is founde.

The soudan and that ladi fre,  
Thei weore togeder but monethes thre, 530  
    That heo ne was grete with childe ;  
Heo gon to chaunge al hire bleo,  
The soudan self hit gon iseo,  
    Joly he wax and wylde.  
Then was the ladi swithe wo,  
Jhesu heo bisoughte tho  
    From schome he scholde hire schilde ;

And bi the fourti wikes ende,  
Heo was delyvered out of beende,  
Thorw help of Marie mylde. 540

And whon the child was ibore  
Wo was the midwyf therfore,  
For lymes hedde hit non ;  
But as a roonde of flesche icore  
In chaumbre lay hire bifore,  
Withouten blod or bon.  
The ladi was wo as heo wolde dyc,  
Hit hedde nouthur neose nor eiye,  
But lay stille as a ston ;  
The soudan com that ilke tyde, 550  
And with his wyf he gon to chyde,  
That wo was hire bigon.

“ Sertes dame, i sei the bifore,  
Ayeyn my goddes thou art forswore,  
Bi riht reson i preve ;  
Therfore this child that is ibore,  
Lyf and lyme hit is forlore,  
Thorw thi false byleeve.  
Thou leevest not riht afyn,  
On Astrot ne on Jovyn, 560  
On morwe ne on eve ;  
On Mahoun ne on Tirmagaunt,  
Therfore iloren is this luytel faunt,  
No wonder thaugh me greve.”

Then the ladi was ful wo,  
Anon onswerde the soudan tho,  
Sire, let be thi thouht ;  
The child that we have togedere two,  
For thi bileeve hit fareth so,  
Bi him that me hath wrouht. 570  
Tak hit up wel sone anon,  
And to yor temple therwith ye gon,  
And loke ye lette hit nouht ;  
And preye thi goddes alle ifeere,  
As thow art hem bothe lef and dere,  
To lyve that hit beo brouht.

And yif Mahoun and Jovin con  
Make hit iformed astur mon,

With lyf and lymes ariht ;  
Be him that al this world wan, 580  
Ichul bileeve upon hem than

That thei beoth muchel of miht ;  
And but thei hit conne to lyve bringe,  
On hem byleeve i nul no thinge,

Nouther bi day nor niht,  
The child he tok up anon,  
In to his temple he con gon  
Bifore his godes hit diht.

Uppon his auter he con hit leyn,  
And heold up his hondes tweyn, 590

The mountaunce of fyve myle :  
A, mihtful Mahoun, he gan sayn,  
And Tirmagaunt so ful of mayn,

In yow nas never gyle ;  
Astrot and sire Jovin,  
'Tirmagaunt and Appolin,

Now help in this peryle !  
Ofte he cryede, and ofte he ros,  
So longe that he wox al hos,  
And al he loste his while. 600

Whon he hedde altogedere ipreyd,  
And al that evere he couthe iseyed,

Hit lay as stille as ston ;  
He sturte him up in a breyd,  
In his herte sore atrayyed,

For boote com ther non.  
Uppon his child he gan to calle,  
Ne holpe him nought his goddes alle,

Wel wo was him bigon ;  
On Tirmagaunt he gon to grede, 610  
"On yow nas never help at nede,  
Fy on ow everichon !"

He hente a staf with herte grete,  
And al his goddes he gan to bete,  
And drouh hem alle adoun,

And leyde on til that he con swete,  
With sterne strokes and with grete,  
    On Jovyn and Plotoun ;  
On Astrot and sire Jovin,  
On Tirmagaunt and Appolin, 620  
    He brak hem scolle and croun ;  
On Tirmagaunt, that was heore brother,  
He laste no lyme hole with other,  
    Ne on his lord seynt Mahoun.

Whon thei weore bete ful good won  
The child lay stille as eny ston ;  
    Upon his auteere ;  
The child he tok up sone anon,  
In to his chaumbre he gan gon,  
    And seide, Dame, have hit here : 630  
Ichave i don al that i con  
To don hit formen after mon,  
    With beodes and with preyere ;  
To alle my goddes ich have bisouht,  
Non of hem con helpe hit nouht ;  
    The devel set hem on fuyre !

Then onswerde that gode womman,  
To hire lord the soudan,  
    Sire, ich the biseche  
The beste red that ich con, 640  
Be him that this world won,  
    To don as i the teche.  
Thou hast assayed goddes thyn,  
Wolte that ich asaye myn,  
    Whether be better leche ?  
And, leove sire, trouwe on this,  
And leef on hym that strengor is,  
    For doute of more wrecche.

Then onswerde the soudan thor,  
In his herte he was ful sor, 650  
    To seo that celli siht ;  
Dame, ichulle don after thi lore,  
Yif that I may seo bifore,  
    That thi god beo of such miht.

With eny strengthe that i con,  
Yif he conforme hit after mon,  
    With lyf and limes ariht,  
Mi false goddes ichul forsake,  
To Jhesu Crist thenne ichul me take,  
    As ich am a trewe kniht.

660

Glad was thenne that gode womman  
That hire lord the soudan  
    Hath grauntede hire preiyere,  
And that he wolde beo Cristene man,  
Hco thonketh him that this world bigan,  
    And Marie his moder dere.  
Nou, lordinges, herkneth a muri pas  
Hou this child icristned was,  
    And hath limes hol and feere ;  
And hou the soudan of Damas  
Was icristnet in that cas,  
    Lustneth and ye schul here.

670

The ladi seide in that stounde,  
Sire, ye have in prisun bounde  
    Mony a Cristene man ;  
Let seche bi lofte and bi grounde,  
Yif eny Cristene prisoun mighte be founde,  
    And bringe bifore me than :  
And ye schul seo er to morwe non  
What my god hymself con don  
    More then thi maumetes can.  
The prisouns wer anon isought,  
A Cristene prest then forth was brouht,  
    Be heste of that soudan.

680

Adoun he fel uppon his kne,  
And seire he grette that ladi fre,  
    And seide with fikynges sore ;  
And seide, Dame, iblesset ye be  
Of god that sit in trinitè,  
    The tyme that ye weore bore.

690

The ladi seide, Art thou a prest,  
 Beleevest thou on Jhesu Crist,  
     Const thou of Cristes lore ?  
 The prest onswerde soone anon,  
*In verbo dei* ich was on,  
     Ten winter seththe and more.

Fyve yer hit is agon,  
 That i ne song masse non,  
     Hit liketh me ful ille ;  
 So long i wis hit is agon, 700  
 I have ilived in prison of ston,  
     With wrong and muchel unskille.  
 The ladi seide, let beo thi fare  
 Thou schalt be brought out of thi care,  
     Yif thou const holde thi stille ;  
 Thorw thin help and myn this stoundes,  
 We schul make Cristene of hethene houndes ;  
     God graunte yif hit be his wille.

Heo seide, Icham the soudans wyf,  
 Thou most do stille withouten stryf, 710  
     Al in privitè ;  
 Her is a child selcouth discrif,  
 Hit nath nouthere lyme ne lyf,  
     Ne eyen for to se.  
 Holy water thou most make,  
 And that wrecche thou most take,  
     For the love of me ;  
 And cristne hit withouten blame,  
 And nempne hit in the fader name,  
     That sitteth in trinitè. 720

On him is al myn help apliht,  
 That ilke lord ful of miht,  
     Of serwe he may me slake ;  
 Yif hit were icristnet ariht,  
 Hit scholde ha forme to seo with siht,  
     With lyf and limes to wake.  
 The ladi bad hire maydens anon,  
 Out of hire chaumbre forté gon,  
     For dreds of wriyying sake ;

The prest anon in that tyde,  
 In feir vessel him bysyde,  
 Holi water gon make. 730

In mid-somer tyde this was done,  
 In worschupe of Crist in trone,  
 As i ow telle may;  
 The prest tok the child anon,  
 And nempne hit to hote Jon,  
 In worschipe of that day.  
 Whon hit was cristned thorw grace,  
 Hit hedde bothe lymes and face, 740  
 And cryede with gret deray,  
 Huyde and heuh, bon and fel,  
 And everi lyme, soth to tel,  
 In stori as ich ow say.

Feirore child miht non be bore,  
 Hit hedde never a lyme ilore,  
 Wel schapen hit was withalle;  
 The prest no longer dwelled thore,  
 But ycode and tolde the soudan fore,  
 As he sat in his halle. 750  
 The ladi lay in hire bed,  
 With riche clothes bespred,  
 Of golde and purple palle,  
 The chyld heo tok up as blyve,  
 And thonked ur ladi with joyes fyve,  
 The miracle that ther was falle.

Lord, heo seide, i preye to the,  
 Almighty god in trinitè,  
 Nou yef me miht and space,  
 That i mote that day isc 760  
 That my lord icrisnet be,  
 The soudan of Damace.  
 The soudan com in that was so blak,  
 The child heo schewed him also spak,  
 With lyf and lymes and face.  
 Heo seide, Mahoun ne Appolin,  
 Were not worth the brustel of a swyn,  
 Aycynes my lordes grace.



Then seide the soudan, Lemmon myn,  
Icham nou glad wel afyn, 780

Mai ne mon blithur be.

Ye, sire, heo seide, be seint Katerin,  
Yif haluendel the child were thyn

Then miht ye gladnes se.

Dame, he seide, hou is that ?

Nis hit not myn that ich biyat ?

No, sire, i wis, seith heo,

But thou weore cristne as hit is,

Thou nast no part therof i wis,

Nouther of child ne of me. 790

But yif thou cristne wol let the make,

More drede and more wrake

The while thou art alyve ;

For yif thou were a Cristene man.

Then were hit thin that thou wan,

Thi child and eke thi wyve :

And whon thou art ded thou schalt wende

To joye that lasteth withouten ende,

May no mon hit discryve.

Dame, seith the soudan, beo nou stille, 800

Ichul ben at thin owne wille,

And ben icristned blyve.

Mi maumetrie ichul forsake,

And cristendom ichul take,

Withinne this thridde day :

No more folk distruye i nil,

I preye that prest to come me til

To teche me Cristene lay.

Priveliche that hit be,

That no mon wite bote we thre, 810

As ferforth as ye may ;

Yif eny hit wist heigh or lowe,

Icholde be brent and don of dowe,

Yif I forsoke my lay.

The prest anon com after than,

And seide to the soudan,

Sire, now icham here,

With al the miht that i con,  
To helpe make the a Cristene mon,  
And godes lawe to lere. 820  
His hond uppon his breste he leide,  
*In verbo dei* he swor and seide,  
To you bothe iferre ;  
'Trew e and trusti ichul be  
To al that evere falleth for me,  
And helpe at my powere.

A morwe, whon the prest awaketh,  
A feir vessel to him he taketh,  
With watur cler and colde ;  
Anon riht for the soudan sake, 830  
His preyers he gon to make,  
To him that Judas solde ;  
And to Marie his moder dere,  
That the soudan cristned were,  
That was so breme and bolde ;  
And yef him miht and spacc  
Thorw his vertu and his grace  
His cristendam wel to holde.

A morwe, as sone as hit was day,  
The soudan in his bed lay, 840  
And up he gan to rise ;  
He clepede the prest, and gon to say,  
Dihthe the redi that thou may  
That schal to my servyse.  
The prest onswerde anon tho,  
Ichave al redi that schal therto,  
Al redi in alle wyse.  
The soudan dihte him naked anon,  
In to the watur he con gon,  
And reseyvede the baptise. 850

The preste hihte fire Cleophas,  
And nempnede so the soudan of Damas,  
After his owne name ;  
His colour that lodlich and blak was,  
Hit by com feir thorw godes gras,  
And cler withoute blame.

Whon the soudan hedde therof a siht,  
 That god was of so muche miht,  
     His care was tornd to game ;  
 Whon the prest hedde al iseid, 860  
 And holy watur on hym leyd,  
     To chaumbre thei wenten in same.

He com ther the ladi lay,  
 Certes, dame, he gon to say,  
     Thi god is good and trewe.  
 The ladi that ilke daye  
 Wepte with hire eyen gray  
     Unnethe hire lord heo knewe.  
 But wel heo wuste in hire thouht  
 On Mahoun he leevde nouht, 870  
     Bi chaungynge of his hewe,  
 And for that he was cristnet so  
 Al awei was hire wo,  
     Hire joye wox al newe.

Sire, heo seide, *pur charité*,  
 Send this prest in privité,  
     To my fader the kyng,  
 And bide him for the love of me,  
 That he come hider to the,  
     With al that he may bring : 880  
 And whon that he is hider icome,  
 He cristene the lond al and some  
     Bothe olde and ying,  
 And hosé nil not cristned be  
 Hong hem heighe uppon a tre,  
     Withouten eny dwellyng.

The soudan tok the prest bi the honde,  
 And bad him go and nothing wonde,  
     To the kyng of Tars ful yare,  
 "And do him to understonde, 890  
 That icham thorw godes sonde  
     Ibrouht al out of care.  
 Bid him com hider with his ost,  
 Priveliche withouten bost,  
     For no thyng that he ne spare."

Forth the prest is iwent,  
 To don the lordes comaundement,  
 To Tars then is he fare.

Forth wente sir Cleophas,  
 To the court thorw godes gras, 900  
 Withouten eny dwellyng,  
 Tolde the kyng al the cas;  
 Hou the child ded-boren was,  
 A misforchapen thing;  
 And thorw the preycere of his wyf  
 Hit hedde bothe lyme and lyf,  
 In the watur of his cristenyng;  
 And hou the proude soudan  
 Was bicom a Cristene man,  
 Thorw miht of hevene kyng. 910

He radde the lettres that he brouht,  
 In the lettre hit was iwrouht,  
 As ich ou telle may,  
 He badde hym come and lette nouht,  
 With al the pouwer that he mouht,  
 Uppon a serteyn day.  
 "Priveliche with thin ost,  
 Thou scholdest come withoute bost,  
 And serche uche cuntray,  
 And hosé wole not cristnet be 920  
 Scholde be honged on a tre,  
 Withouten eny delay."

A gladdor mon mighte not ben,  
 He clepte his barouns and his qwen,  
 And tolde hem in his sawe,  
 The soudan, that stout and kene,  
 Cristnet was withouten wene,  
 And leevde on Cristes lawe.  
 And to me hath isent his sonde,  
 He wol cristene al his londe, 930  
 Yif he mihte wel fawe:  
 He nil not come to cristenyng,  
 Weore he never so heigh lordyng,  
 He scholde be to-drawe.

Therefore, lordynges, out-riht,  
Duik, erl, baroun, and kniht,  
Let yor folk out beode,  
And whon that ye beth redi diht,  
With helm on hed and brunye briht,  
Help me wel at neode.

940

The kyng of Tars, that ilke tyde,  
Sente aboute bi uche a syde,  
To knihtes douhti in dede ;  
The kyng dihte him for to wende,  
With sixti thousand knihtes hende,  
This was a feir felawrede.

Forth he went, withouten let,  
The same day that he hedde set,  
To the soudan wel yare ;  
Whon thei were togeder imet,  
A muri gretyng ther was gret,  
Of lordes that ther ware.

950

A semely siht was to se  
The ladi falde down on kne  
Bifore hire fader thare ;  
Ther was joye, pité also,  
Whon heo tolde of weole and wo,  
Of auntres that weore fare.

The soudan ther he sat in halle,  
He clepede his knihtes bforen him alle,  
And al his oun meynè,  
Bi heore name he gan him calle,  
Lordynges, whatsoever bifalle,  
Icristned ye schul be.

960

For ichave Mahoun forsake,  
To Jhesu Crist ich have me take,  
And sertes so schul be ;  
And hosé wol not so don,  
He schal ben honged swithe son,  
Be him that dyyed on tre.

970

Whon the soudan hedde thus told,  
Ther was mony a Sarazin bold,  
That with the soudan were,

Summe seide that thei wolde,  
And summe seide that thei nolde,  
    Be cristened in none manere.  
And hosé wolde here maumetes forsake,  
Cristene men let hem take,  
    And weore hem lef and dere ;  
And ho that nolde do bi heore red,  
Cristen men tak of heore hed,  
    Faste bi the swere.

980

The soudan had in his prison riht,  
Thritti thousand prisons apliht,  
    Of mony an uncouth theode,  
Thei that were strong and wiht,  
He delyverede hem anon riht,  
    And armed hem upon stede :  
And thei that mihte not so do,  
He yaf hem mete and drynk also,  
    And al that hem was nede ;  
Men mihte seo in that court than  
Moni a blythe Cristene man,  
    In stori as we rede.

990

Anon riht in that ille tyde,  
Thorw out his lond on uche a syde,  
    This word wel wyde sprong,  
Thei sent aboute fer and nerre  
Uppon the soudan fer to werre,  
    And seiden for that wrong,  
Bi Mahoun and Tirmagaunt,  
No mon schal be heore warant,  
    Weore thei never so stronge ;  
Bothe soudan and kyng,  
And al that hem was folewyng,  
    The dethe thei scholde afonge.

1000

Fyf kynges were of heigh parayle,  
Uppon the soudan thei beode bataile,  
    That strong and douhti were ;  
Hou the soudan hem gon assayle,  
And what thei hihte withoute fayle,  
    Lustneth, and ye mouwe here.

1010

The kyng Kenedok and kyng Lesyas,  
 Kyng Merkel, and kyng Cleomadas,  
     Kyng Menbrok was heore fere,  
 Theos fyf kynges forth bewent,  
 Moni a mon thei slowe and schent,  
     With strengthe and gret pouwere.

Uppon a day the kyng and the soudan  
 An hard batayle thei bigan, 1020  
     Uppon this kynges fyve,  
 Ayeynes o Cristene man,  
 Ten hethene houndes wer ther than  
     Of Sarazins stoute and stythe.  
 Herkeneth now, bothe olde and ying,  
 Hou the soudan and the kyng  
     Among hem gunne to dryve,  
 And hou the Sarazins that day  
 Hopped hedles for heore pray,  
     I schall ow tell as blyve. 1030

The Cristene soudan that tyde  
 Tok a spere and gon to ryde,  
     Ayeyn Kenedok so kene,  
 The kyng, that was so ful of pryde,  
 His spere he lette to hym glyde,  
     To wite withouten wene.  
 So harde togidere thei riden thare,  
 Both the speres that thei bare  
     Borsten hem bitwene,  
 The soudan drou his swerd ful good, 1040  
 The kynges hed with the hod  
     He strek of quit and clene.

Kyng Lesyas of Taboric  
 To the soudan hedde envye,  
     For Kendok kyng was slawe ;  
 He toke a spere, withoute lye,  
 Ayeyn the soudan he gan hyghe,  
     And wolde hym sle ful fawe.  
 The kyng of Tars bitwene hem rod,  
 And Lesyas streak he abod, 1050  
     As i fynde in my sawe ;

He smot him so the scheld  
That hit fley into the feld,  
Adoun he hath hym drawe.

He leop to horse, and gon to ryde,  
And slough a doun bi uche a syde,  
Alle that he bifore him founde ;  
And alle that ever he hutte that tyde,  
Weore he never so proud in pryde,  
He yaf hem dethes wounde.  
The kyng of Tars with his spere  
Thorw the bodi he gon hym bere,  
And falde him ded to grounde ;  
The Sarazins nomen up a cri,  
Now, Mahoun, ful of merci,  
Help now in this stounde !

1060

Kyng Merkel was ful wo,  
To fihten anon he was ful thro,  
A spere in honde he hent,  
He priked his stede and let him go,  
The kyng of Tars he thoughte to slo,  
Er he thennes went.  
He smot the kyng that ilke tyde  
Thorw his hauberk in the syde,  
That neih he hedde be schent ;  
The kyng of Tars out of his sadel fel,  
The blod out of his wounde wel,  
Mony mon hit bi ment.

1070

Whon the soudan saugh his blod,  
For wraththe he thoughte he was neih wod,  
And gon to prike with mayn,  
He and al his felawrede  
Brought hem ayein uppon his stede,  
And halp hym up ayayn.  
Whon he was on his stede ibrouht,  
Al that he hutte and arauht,  
He clef hem in to brayn :  
Hying Merkel aycyn him went,  
And yaf hym such a nother dunt,  
That neih he hadde hym slayn.

1080

1090



Whon the soudan saugh that siht,  
Wod for wraththe he was aplight,  
    And rod to the kyng Merkel,  
And smot him so on the scheld,  
That he fel in to the feld,  
    Among that houndes fel :  
The kyng of Tars in that stounde  
Hath sypt of that hethene hounde,  
    That er hedde foughte so wel ;  
He swor, be him that tholedde wounde, 1100  
That hethene dogge schal to grounde,  
    Be the help of seint Michel.

I nul not dyen in his dette,  
A strok on hym ichul bisette,  
    Beo he never so bolde ;  
Ur ladi with an avé he grette,  
That no mon scholde hym lette,  
    The feendes strengthe to folde.  
He rod to hym anon riht,  
With a dunt of mucche miht, 1110  
    In stori as hit is tolde ;  
He hutte him on the helm on hiht.  
Into the brayn thorw bacinet briht,  
    Thus is his servyse yolde.

Kyng Membrok was in gret payn  
Whon he saugh thus his felawes slayn,  
    And in the feld to drevet,  
He priked his hors with miht and mayn.  
And fleigh aweiward on that playn,  
    For to huyden his heved. 1120  
The Cristene soudan in that tyde  
Aftur him he gan to ryde,  
    For no thyng he ne leved,  
And smot him so fer al his scheld  
As he flegh in that feld,  
    Quitliche of his heved.

Thus the ladi with hire lore,  
Broughte hire frendes out of sore,  
    'Thorw Jhesu Cristes grace ;  
Al the while that thei weore thare,  
The joye that was among hem yare,  
    No mon may telle the space.  
Whon thei weore out of world iwent,  
Bifore god omnipotent,  
    Hem was diht a place.  
Now Jhesu, that is ful of miht,  
Graunt us alle in hevene liht  
    To seo thi swete face !

1130





## EMARE.



THE immediate French original of this ancient and excellent romance (here given from a unique copy in the Cotton manuscript, Caligula, A II.) is not known to be preserved, though so frequently referred to in the poem itself; for instance :

“As i here synge in songe.”—V. 2.

The story, however, is related, at great length, though with some variations, and under different names, by the poet Gower, in the second book of his *Confessio amantis*, and, after him, by Chaucer, in his *Man of lawes tale*.\* The former, who makes the lady, whom he calls *Constance*, or *Custen*, daughter to *Tiberius Constantyn*, a fabulous Christian Emperor of Rome, refers to “the cronike,” as his authority; and may, therefore, seem to have been indebted to some work in the nature of the *Gesta Romanorum*, in which it is not to be now found. It, likewise, occurs (much altered, and very concisely abridged) in *Il Pecorone de ser Giovanni Florentino*, said to have been composed in the year 1378 (see *Gior.* X. No. 1); the author of which may seem to have been indebted to an MS. of

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\* This imitation affords a convincing proof that Gower, a poet anterior to Chaucer, though many of the latter's pieces happen to appear with an earlier date than his own. He, in fact, expressly calls Chaucer, his “disciple, and poete,” for that, “in the flowres of his youth,” he had made for his sake “ditecs and songes glade.” There could not, however, be much difference in their ages; as Chaucer was “nowe in his daies olde;” and Gower himself, in 1396, both old and blind; though he survived Chaucer about two years, which short period he made use of to damn his own reputation to all eternity.

the National Library, Paris, (No. 8701, a paper-book written in 1370), intitled *Fabula romanensis de rege Francorum, ejus nomen reticetur, qui in filia sua adulterium et incestum committere voluit.*" After all, the primary source of this popular history is, most probably, to be found in a legendary life of a spurious Offa the first king of the West Angles, attributed to Matthew Paris (see Watts's Edition of his *Historia major*, &c. P. 965): and, in support of this conjecture, it may be observed, that even Gower lays part of his scene in England.



## E M A R E.



Jhesu, that ys kyng in trone,  
As thou shoope bothe sonne and mone,  
And all that shall dele and dyghte,  
Now lene us græce such dedes to done,  
In thy blys that we may wone,  
Men calle hit heven lyghte ;  
And thy moder, Mary, hevyn qwene,  
Bere our arunde so bytwene,  
That semely ys of syght,  
To thy sone that ys so fre,  
In heven with hym that we may be,  
That lord ys most of myght.

10

Menstrelles, that walken fer and wyde,  
Her and ther in every a syde,  
In mony a dyverse londe,  
Sholde, at her begynnyng,  
Speke of that ryhtwes kyng,  
That made both see and sonde.  
Whoso wyll a stounde dwelle,  
Of mykyl myrht y may you telle,  
And mornyng ther amonge,  
Of a lady fayr and fre,  
Her name was called Emare,  
As i here synge in songe.

20

Her fadyr was an emperour,  
Of castell, and of ryche towre,  
Syr Artyus was hys nome ;  
He hadde bothe hallys and bowrys,  
Frythes fayr, forestes with flowrys,  
So gret a lord was none.  
Weddedde he had a lady,  
That was both fayr and semely,  
Whyte as whalës bone,

30

Dame Erayne hette that emperes,  
 She was full of love and goodnesse,  
 So curtays lady was none.

Syr Artyus was the best manne  
 In the worlde that lyvede thanne,

Both hardy and therto wyght,

He was curtays in all thyng,

40

Bothe to olde and to yynge,

And well kowth dele and dyght.

He hadde but on chyld in his lyve,

Begeten on his weddedde wyfe,

And that was fayr and bryght ;

For sothe, as y may telle the,

They called that chyld Emarec,

That semely was ol syght.

When she was of her moder born,  
 She was the fayrest creature borne,

50

That yn the lond was thoo,

The emperes, that fayr ladye,

Fro her lord gan she dye,

Or hyt kowthe speke or goo.

The chyld, that was fayr and gent,

To a lady was hyt sente,

That men called Abro,

She thawghth hit curtesye and thewe,

Golde and sylke for to sewe,

Amonge maydenes moo.

60

Abro tawghte thys mayden small,  
 Nortour that men usedenn in sale,

Whyle she was in her bowre ;

She was curtays in all thyng,

Bothe to old and to yynge,

And whythe as lylce flowre ;

Of her hondes she was slye,

All he loved that her syc,

Wyth menske and mychel honour.

At the meydene leve we,

70

And at the lady fayr and fre ;

And fpeke we of the emperour.

The emperour, of gentyll blode,  
 Was a curteys lorde and a gode,  
 In all maner of thyng,  
 Aftur when his wyf was dede,  
 And ledde his lyf yn weddewede,  
 And myche loved playnge.  
 Sone aftur yn a whyle,  
 The ryche kynge of Cesyle  
 To the emperour gann wende,  
 A ryche present wyth hym he browght,  
 A cloth that was wordylle wrought,  
 He wellcomed hym as the hende.

80

Syr Tergaunte, that nobyll knyght,  
 He presented the emperour ryght,  
 And sette hym on hys kne,  
 Wyth that cloth rychly dyght,  
 Full of stones ther hit was pyght,  
 As thykke as hit myght be,  
 Off topaze and rubyes,  
 And other stones of myche prys,  
 That semely wer to se,  
 Of crapowtes and nakette,  
 As thykke as they sette,  
 For sothe as y say the.

90

The cloth was displayed sone,  
 The emperour lokede therupone,  
 And myght hyt not se,  
 For glysteryng of the ryche ston  
 Redy syght had he non,  
 And sayde, How may thys be?  
 The emperour sayde on hygh,  
 Sertes thys ys a fayry,\*  
 Or ellys a vanyte.

100

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\* The old queen in V: 446, says,

—— "Sone, thys ys a *fende*,  
 In this wordy wede."

Gower, in his legend of *Constance* (the *Emare* of the present poem), makes Domilde, the king's mother, write, in the forged letter to her son,

"Thy wife, which is of *fairie*,  
 Of suche a childe delivered is,  
 Fro kinde, which stante all amis."

The kyng of Cysyle answered than,  
So ryche a jwell ys ther non  
In all Crystyante.

The amerayle dowghter of hethennes  
Made this cloth withouten lees,  
And wrowghte hit all with pride,  
And putreyed hyt with gret honour,  
Wyth ryche golde and asowr,  
And stoncs on ylke a syde ;  
And, as the story telles in honde,  
The stoncs that yn this cloth stonde  
Sowghte they wer full wyde,  
Seven wynter hit was yn makynge,  
Or hit was browght to endynge,  
In herte ys not to hyde.

110

120

In that on korner made was  
Idoyne and Amadas,\*  
With love that was so trewe,

In another passage, of the same tale, he says,

“The god of hir hath made an ende,  
And fro this worldes fayrie  
Hath taken hir into companie :”

but what he means by “this worldes fayrie,” is not easy to surmise.

\* The story of these lovers is mentioned by Gower (*Confessio amantis*, fo. 133):

“Myn ere with a good pittance  
Is fed of redinge of romance,  
Of *Idoyne* and of *Amadas*,  
That whilome were in my cas.”

It is likewise, as Mr. Warton has observed, cited in the prologue to a collection of legends, called *Cursus mundi*, an ancient poem, translated from the French:

“Men lykyn jestis for to here,  
And romans rede in divers manere,

\* \* \* \* \*

Of king John, and of Isenbras,  
Of *Ydoine* and *Amas*.”

Their names also occur in the old *fabliau* of *Gautier d'Aupais* (*Fabliaux ou contes*, C 335). The adventures of “*la belle Ydoine*” are contained, according to M. De Bure (*Cata. de la bib. du D. de la Valliere*: additions, 53), in the last part of the MS. *Roman d'Aymeri de Narbonne*: but this is a mistake; “*Le viel* [not *La belle*] *Ydoine*,” being actually, in that romance, a king of Arabia:

“*Le fils Guyon suex le vair iert assis,  
Et fiert Ydoine qui fu rois darrabiz.*”



For they loveden hem wit honour,  
 Portrayed they wer with trewe-love flour,  
 Of stones bryght of hewe,  
 Wyth carbunkull and safere,  
 Kassydons and onyx so clere,  
 Sette in golde newe,  
 Deamondes and rubyes, 130  
 And other stones of mychyll pryse,  
 And menstrellys with her gle.

In that other corner was dyght,  
 Trystram and Isowde\* so bryght,  
 That semely wer to se,  
 And for they loved hem ryght,  
 As full of stones ar they dyght,  
 As thykke as they may be,  
 Of topase and of rubyes,  
 And other stones of myche pryse, 140  
 That semely wer to se,  
 Wyth crapawtes and nakette,  
 Thykke of stones ar they sette,  
 For sothe as y say the.

"*Pris fu Ydoine & Margaris li roys.*"

"*Le viex Ydoine du chief de son pais.*"

"*Le viel Ydoine apela en se croi.*"

"*Le roy Ydoine a pris baptizement.*"

(*MSS. Reg. 20, D XI.*)

Another instance has been already mentioned of a knight's name in one romance being a lady's in another.

\* Two famous lovers; the subject of many an ancient romance. A valuable fragment of one in French verse is in the possession of Francis Douce, Esquire; and another, very curious, and possibly still older, but, unfortunately, imperfect, the composition, it is conjectured, of Thomas of Learmont, or of Ercildon, *alias* Rymer, a celebrated prophet, whether Scottish or English, is preserved in the Edinburgh manuscript, and will be speedily and ably published, by a gentleman every way qualified to do it justice. Of the prose romance are several editions, the first of which, with a date, was printed, at Paris, in 1489, though there is another, possibly still more ancient. There is, likewise, a manuscript copy in the king's library in the Museum (20 D II); in an account of which, by the learned and accurate Mr. Pinkerton (*Ancient Scottish Poems*, P. lxxvi), he has very ingeniously converted *Jeult la blonde*, the heroine, into a certain *Scult Labonde*, the author of the romance. Another is in the possession of Mr. Douce. Their adventures are, likewise, imperfectly related in *Mort d'Arthur*.

In the thrydde korner, with gret honour,  
 Was Florys and dam Blawnecheflour,\*  
     As love was hem betwene,  
 For they loved wyth honour,  
 Putrayed they wer with trewe-love-flower,  
     Wyth stones bryght and shene. 150  
 Ther wer knyghtes and senatowres,  
 Emerawdes of gret vertues,  
     To wyte withouten wene,  
 Deamondes and koralle,  
 Perydotes and crystall,  
     And gode garnettes bytwene.

In the fowrthe korner was oon  
 Of Babylone the sowdan sonne,  
     The amerayles dowghtyr hym by,  
 For his sake the cloth was wrowght, 160  
 She loved hym in hert and thowght,  
     As testymoyeth this storye.  
 The fayr mayden her byforn  
 Was portrayed an unykorn,  
     With hys horn so hye,  
 Flowres and bryddes on ylke a syde,  
 With stones that wer sowght wyde,  
     Stuffed wyth ymagerye.

When the cloth to ende was wrowght,  
 To the sowdan sone hit was browght, 170  
 That semely was of syghte :

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\* The romance of Floris and Blanchefleur is one of the most ancient and popular in the French language. It is in verse, and copies are extant in the national library, Paris (*Bib. Colber.* 3128, and *Bib. Cois.* 733), and was in that of St. Germain-desprès. (See *Bib. universelle des romans*, Fevrier, 1777, and *Fabliaux ou contes*, A, 254). The French history in prose, (Paris, 1554, and Lyons, 1571), is a translation from the Spanish, *Floris y. Blancaflor*, Alcalá, 1512, 4to. An English version was formerly in the Cotton Library (Vitellius, D. III. destroyed by the fatal conflagration of 1731), and is entered in the catalogue, under the title of "*Versus de amoribus Florisii juvenis & Blanchefloræ puellæ, lingua veteri Anglicana.*" An imperfect copy, however, is preserved in the Edinburgh manuscript. The adventures of Florio and Biancaflore, which form the principal subject of the Philocopo of Boccaccio, were famous long before the time of that author, as he himself informs us. Floris and Blancaflor are mentioned as illustrious lovers by Matfres Eymengau de Bezers, a Languedocian poet, in his *Breviari d'amor*, dated in the year 1288. See Tyrwhitt's *Introductory discourse*, n. 25.

" My fadyr was a nobyll man,  
 Of the sowdan he hit wan,  
     Wyth maystrye and myghth ;  
 For gret love he yaf hyt me,  
 I brynge hit the in specyaltè,  
     Thys cloth ys rychely dyght."  
 He yaf hit the emperour,  
 He receyved hit with gret honour,  
     And thonkede hym fayr and ryght,

180

The kyng of Cesyle dwelled ther  
 As long as his wyll wer,  
     With the emperour for to play,  
 And when he wolde wende,  
 He toke his leve at the hende,  
     And wente forth on hys way.  
 Now Remeneth this nobyll kyng,  
 The emperour after his dowghter hadde longyng,  
     To speke with that may,  
 Messengeres forth he sent,

190

Aftyr the mayde fayre and gent,  
     That was bryght as someres day.

Messengeres dyghte hem in hyc,  
 With myche myrthe and melodye,  
     Forth gon they fare,  
 Both by stretes and by stye,  
 After that fayr lady,  
     Was godely unther gare.  
 Her norysse, that hyghte Abro,  
 With her she goth forth also,

200

    And wer sette in a chare,  
 To the emperour gan the go,  
 He come aycyn hem a myle or two,  
     A fayr metyng was there.

The mayden, whyte as lylve flour.  
 Lyghte aycyn her fadyr, the emperour,  
     Two knyghtes gan her lede.  
 Her fadyr, that was of gret renowne,  
 That of golde wered the crowne,  
     Lyghte of hys stede ;

210

When they wer bothe on her fete,  
 He klypped her ond kyssed her swete,  
 And bothe on fote they yede,  
 They wer glad and made good chere,  
 To the palys they yede in fere.  
 In romans as we rede.

Then the lordes that wer grete,  
 They wesh and seten down \* to mete,†  
 And folk hem served swyde,  
 The mayden, that was of sembelant swete, 220  
 Byfore her owene fadur sete,  
 The fayrest wommon on lyfe.  
 That all his hert and alle his thowghth,  
 Her to love was yn browght,  
 He byhelde her ofte sythe,  
 So he was anamored his thowghter tyll,  
 With her he thowghth to worche his wyll,  
 And wedde her to hys wyfe.

And when the mete-whyle was down,  
 Into hys chamber he wente soun, 230  
 And called his counseyle nere,  
 He bad they shulde sone go and come,  
 And gete leve of the pope of Rome,  
 To wedde that mayden clere.  
 Messengeres forth they wente,  
 They durst not breke his commandement,  
 And erles with hem yn sere,  
 They wente to the courte of Rome,  
 And browghte the popus bullus sone,  
 To wedde his dowghter dere. 240

Then was the emperour gladde and blythe,  
 And lette shape a robe swythe,  
 Of that cloth of golde,

\* Original reading : *du*.

† It was an invariable custom, in ancient times, for all the guests to wash their hands before sitting down to table ; many other instances whereof occur in these romances.

And when hit was don her upon,  
 She semed non erthely wommon,  
     That marked was of molde.  
 Then seyde the emperour so fre,  
 Dowghtyr, y woll wedde the,\*  
     Thow art so fresh to beholde.  
 Then sayde that wordy unther wede, 250  
 Nay, syr, god of heven hit forbede,  
     That ever do so we shulde !

Yyf hit so betydde that ye me wedde,  
 And we shulde play togedere in bedde,  
     Bothe we were forlorne ;  
 The worde shulde sprynge fer and wyde  
 In all the worlde on every syde,  
     The worde shulde be borne.  
 Ye ben a lorde of gret pryce,  
 Lorde, lette never suche sorow aryce, 260  
     Take god you beforne ;  
 That my fader shulde wedde me,  
 God forbede that i hyt so se,  
     That wered the crowne of thorne !

The emperour was ryght wrothe,  
 And swore many a gret othe,  
     That deed shulde she be ;

---

\* This incestuous proposal is unnoticed by Gower and Chaucer, who relate this part of the story in a different way: but Matthew Paris supposes the daughter of the petty-king of York, whom Offa finds in a forest, to give him this account of herself: "*Hujus incomparabilis pulchritudinis singularem eminentiam, pater admirans, amatorio dæmone seductus, cepit eam incestu libidinoso concupiscere, et ad amorem illicitum, sæpe sollicitare, ipsam puellam minis, pollicitis, blanditiis, atque muneribus adolescentulæ temptans emolire constantiam. Illa autem operi nefario nullatenus acquiescens, . . . pater itaque . . . præcepit eam in desertum solitudinis remotæ duci, vel potius trahi, et crudelissima morte condemnatam, bestiis ibidem derelinqui.*" As it may be objected that this Princess is banished into a forest, instead of being exposed upon the ocean, the legendary appears to have reserved the latter incident for the pretended life of another Offa, king of the Mercians, where we are told that a certain lady, cousin to Charlemagne, with a beauteous face, but no better than she should be, was, for a flagitious crime which she had committed, put into a boat, without tackling, and exposed to the casualties of the winds and waves; but, landing on the British coast, she became, in a short time, the wife of this Offa.

He lette make a nobull boot,  
 And dede her theryn god wote,  
     In the robe of nobull ble. 270  
 She moste have with her no spendyng,  
 Nother mete ne drynke\* [givyng],  
     Bot shote her yn to the se;  
 Now the lady dwelled thore,  
 Wythowte anker or ore,  
     And that was gret pytè.

Ther come a wynd, y untherstonde,  
 And blewe the boot fro the londe,  
     Of her they lost the syght,  
 The emperour hym bethowght, 280  
 That he hadde all mysrowht,  
     And was a sory knyghte.  
 And as he stode yn studyng,  
 He fell down in sowenyng,  
     To the yrthe was he dyght;  
 Gret lordes stode therby,  
 And toke up † the emperour hastyly,  
     And consorted hym fayr and ryght.

When he of sownyng kovered was,  
 Sore he wepte and sayde, Alas, 290  
     For my dowhter dere!  
 Alas, that y was made man,  
 Wrecched kaytyf that i hit am! †  
     The teres ronnc by his lere.  
 I wrawght ayceyn goddes lay,  
 To her that was so trewe of fay:  
     Alas, why ner she here!

---

\* It is very singular that these lines should nearly occur again in V. 593:

"And lette her have no spendyng,  
     For no mete, ny for drynke."

Thus in the original; but as the word *drynke* by no means answers in rhyme to *spendyng*; and either line is too short for the metre; though the poem is sufficiently correct, in every other place; the editor has taken the liberty to insert, after *drynke*, in the first passage, (*giving*), and to alter it, in the other, to *drynkynge*; being reduced to the unpleasant alternative of either suffering both defects to remain, or hazarding these very unsatisfactory conjectures.

† Original reading: *un*.

‡ Conjectural emendation: *that i am*!

The teres lashed out of his yyen,  
The grete lordes that hyt syyen,  
Wepte and made yll chere. 300

Ther was nother olde ny yyng,  
That kowthe stynte of wepyng,  
For that comely unther kelle,  
Into shypys faste gan they thryng,  
For to seke that mayden yyng,  
That was so fayr of flesh and fell ;  
They her sowght over all yn the see,  
And myghte not fynde that lady fre,  
Aycyn they come full snell.  
At the emperour now leve we, 310  
And of the lady yn the see,  
I shall begynne to tell.

The ladye fleted forth alone,  
To god of heven she made her mone,  
And to hys modyr also ;  
She was dryven with wynde and rayn,  
With strong stormes her agayn,  
Of the water so blo.  
As y have herd menstrelles syng yn sawe,  
Hows ny lond myghth she non knawe, 320  
Aferd she was to go,  
She was so dryven fro wawe to wawe,  
She hyd her hede and laye full lawe,  
For watyr she was full woo.

Now this lady dwelled thore  
A good seven nyghth and more,  
As hit was goddys wylle,  
With carefull herte, and sykyng sore,  
Such sorow was here yarked yore,  
And ever lay she styll. 330  
She was dryven ynto a lond,  
Thorow the grace of goddes sond,  
That all thyng may fulfyll,  
She was on the see so harde bestadde,  
For hunger and thurste almost madde,  
Woo worth wederes yll!

She was dryven into a lond,  
 That hyghth Galys, y untherstond,  
     That was a fayr cuntre,  
 The kynges steward dwelled ther bysyde, 340  
 In a kastell of mykyll pryde,  
     Syr Kadore hyght he.  
 Every day wolde he go,  
 And take with hym a sqwyer or two,  
     And play hym by the see ;  
 On a tyme he toke the eyr,  
 With two knyghtes gode and fayr,  
     The wedur was lythe of le.

A boot he fond by the brym,  
 And a glysteryng theryn, 350  
     Therof they had ferly,  
 They went forth on the sond,  
 To the boot i untherstond,  
     And fond theryn that lady.  
 She hadde so longe meteles be,  
 That hym thowht dele to se,  
     She was in poynt to dye.  
 They askede her what was her name,  
 She chaunged hit ther anone,  
     And sayde she hette Egare. 360

Syr Kadore hadde gret pytè,  
 He toke up the lady of the see,  
     And hom gan he lede ;  
 She hadde so longe meteles be,  
 She was wax lene as a tre,  
     That wordy unther wede.  
 Into hys castell when she came,  
 Into a chawmbyr tney her namm,  
     And fayr they gann her fede,  
 Wyth all delycyus mete and drynke, 370  
 That they myghth hem on thynke,  
     That was yn all that stede.

When that lady, fayr of face,  
 With mete and drynke kevered was,  
     And had colour agayne,



She tawghte hem to sewe and marke  
All maner of sylkyn werke,

Of her they wer full fayne.

She was curteys yn all thyng,

Bothe to olde and to yyng,

380

I say yow for certeyne ;

She kowthe werke all maner thyng,

That fell to emperour or to kyng,

Erle, barown, or swayne.

Syr Kadore lette make a feste,

That was fayr and honeste,

Wyth hys lorde the kyng,

Ther was myche menstralsè,

Trompus, tabors, and sawtrè,

Bothe harpe and fydyllyng.

390

The lady, that was gentyll and small,

In kurtull alone served yn hall,

Byfore that nobull kyng,

The cloth upon her shone so bryghth,

When she was theryn ydyghth,

She semed non erdly thyng.

The kyng loked her upon,

So fayr a lady he sygh never non,

His herte she hadde yn wolde,

He was so anamered of that syghth,

400

Of the mete non he myghth,

But faste gan her beholde ;

She was so fayr and gent,

The kynges love on her was lent,

In tale as hyt ys tolde ;

And when the mete-whyle was down,

In to the chamber he wente soun,

And called his barouns bolde.

Fyrst he called syr Kadore,

And other knyghtes that ther wore,

410

Hastely come hym tyll,

Dukes and erles, wyse of lore,

Hastely come the kyng before,

And askede what was his wyll.

Then spakke the ryche yn ray,  
To syr Kadore gan he say,  
    Wordes fayr and styлле:  
Syr, whenns ys that lovely may,  
That yn the halle served this day?  
    Tell me yf hyt be thy wyll.

420

Then sayde syr Kadore, Y untherstonde,  
Hyt ys an erles thowghter of ferre londe,  
    That semely ys to sene,  
I sente after her, certeynlye,  
To teche my chylderen curtesye,  
    In chambur wyth hem to bene.  
She ys the konnyngest wommon,  
I trowe that be yn Crystendom,  
    Of werk that y have sene.  
Then sayde that ryche raye,  
I wyll have that fayr may,  
    And wedde her to my quene.

430

The nobull kyng, verament,  
After his modyr he sent,  
    To wyte what she wolde say.  
They browght forth hastely  
That fayr mayde Egarye,  
    She was bryghth as someres day,  
The cloth on her shon so bryght,  
When she was theryn dyght,  
    And her self a gentell may.  
The olde qwene sayde anon,  
I sawe never wommon  
    Halvendell so gay.

440

The old quene spakke wordes unhende,  
And sayde, Sone, thys ys a fende,  
    In this wordy wede,  
As thou lovest my blessinge,  
Make thou never this weddyng,  
    Cryst hit de forbede!  
Then spakke the ryche ray,  
Modyr, y wyll have this may,  
    And forth gan her lede.

450

The olde quene, for certayne,  
Turnede with ire hom agayne,  
And wolde not be at that dede.

The kyng wedded that lady bryght,  
Grete purvyance ther was dyghth,  
In that semely sale,  
Grete lordes wer served aryght, 460  
Duke, erle, baron and knyghth,  
Both of grete and smale.  
Myche folke for sothe ther was,  
And thereto an huge prese,  
As hit ys tolde in tale,  
Ther was all maner thyng,  
That fell to a kynges weddyng,

And mony a ryche menstrall.  
When the mangery was done,  
Grete lordes departed sone, 470  
That semely were to see,  
The kyng be laste with the qwene,  
Moch love was hem betwene,  
And also game and gle;  
She was curteys and swete,  
Such a lady herde y never of yete;  
They loved both with herte fre.  
The lady that was both meke and mylde,  
Conceyved and wente with chylde,  
As god wolde hit sholde be. 480

The kyng of France, yn that tyme,  
Was besette with many a Sarcyne,  
And cumbered all in tene;  
And sente after the kyng of Galys,  
And other lordys of myche prys,  
That semely were to sene.  
The kyng of Galys, in that tyde,  
Gedered men on every syde,  
In armour bryght and shene;  
Then sayde the kyng to Syr Kadore, 490  
And other lordes that ther wore,  
Take good hede to my qwene.

The kyng of Fraunce spared none,  
But sent for hem everychone,

Both kyng, knyghth, and clerke;  
The stiward,\* bylaft at home,  
To kepe the qwene whyte as fome,

He com not at that werke.  
She wente with chylde, yn place,  
As longe as goddes wyll was,

500

That semely unther serke;  
Thyll ther was of her body  
A fayr chylde borne, and a godele,  
Hadde a dowbyll kynges marke.

They hit crystened with grete honour,  
And called hym Segramour,

Frely was that fode;  
Then the steward syr Kadore,  
A nobull letter made he thore,  
And wrowghte hit all with gode.

510

He wrowghte hit yn hyghynge,  
And sente hit to his lorde the kyng,  
That gentyll was of blode;  
The messenger forth gan wende,  
And with the kynges moder gan lende,  
And yn to the castell he yode.

He was resseyved rychely,  
And she hym askede hastyly,  
How the qwene hadde spedde;  
"Madame, ther ys of her yborne  
A fayr man chylde, y tell you beforne,  
And she lyth yn her bedde."

520

She yaf hym, for that tydynge,  
A robe and fowrty shylynge,  
And rychely hym cladde:  
She made hym dronken of ale and wyne;  
And when she sawe that hit was tyme,  
Tho chambur she wole hym lede.

And when he† was on slepe browght,  
The qwene that was of wykked thowght,  
Tho chambur gan she wende;

530

\* Original reading: *steward*.

† Original reading: *she*.

Hys letter she toke hym fro,  
In a fyre she brente hit do,  
Of werkes she was unhende.  
Another letter she made with evyll,  
And sayde the qwene had born a devyll,  
Durst no mon come her hende.  
Thre heddes hadde he there  
A lyon, a dragon, and a beere,  
A fowll feltred fende.

540

On the morn, when hit was day,  
The messenger wente on his way,  
Bothe by stye and strete,  
In trwe story as y say,  
Tyll he come ther as the kynge laye,  
And speke wordes swete.  
He toke the kyng the letter yn honde,  
And he hit redde, y untherstonde,  
The teres down gan he lete.  
And as he stode yn redyng,  
Downe he fell yn sowenyng,  
For sorow his herte gan blede.

550

Grete lordes that stonde hym by,  
Toke up the kyng hastely,  
In herte he was full woo ;  
Sore he grette and sayde, Alas !  
That y ever man born was,  
That hit ever so shullde be ;  
Alas ! that y was made a kynge,  
And sygh wedded the fayrest thyng  
That on erthe myght go ;  
That ever Jhesu hymself wolde sende,  
Such a fowle lothly fende,  
To come bytwene us too !

560

When he sawe hit myght no better be,  
Another letter then made he,  
And seled hit with his sele ;  
He commanded yn al thyng,  
To kepe well that lady yynge,  
Tyll she hadde her hele ;

570

Bothe gode men and ylle  
 To serve her at her wyll,  
     Bothe yn wo and wele :  
 He toke this letter of his honde,  
 And rode thorow the same londe,  
     By the kynges modur castell.

And then he dwelled ther all nyght,  
 He was resseyved and rychely dyght,  
     And wyste of no treson ;  
 He made hym well at ese and fyne, 580  
 Bothe of brede, ale, and wyne,  
     And that berafte hym his reson.  
 When he was on slepe browht,  
 The false qwene his letter sowghte,  
     In to the fyre she kaste hit downe ;  
 Another letter she lette make,  
 That men sholde the lady take,  
     And lede her out of towne.

And putte her ynto the see,  
 In that robe of ryche ble, 590  
     The lytyll chylde her wyth ;  
 And lette her have no spendyng,  
 For no mete, ny for drynkyng,\*  
     But lede her out of that kyth.†  
 Upon payn of chylde and wyfe  
 And also upon your owene lyfe  
     Lette her have no gryth ;  
 The messenger knew no gyle,  
 But rode hom mony a myle,  
     By forest and by fryth. 600

And when the messenger come home,  
 The steward toke the letter sone,  
     And bygan to rede ;  
 Sore he syght and sayde, alas !  
 Serres this ys a fowle case,  
     And a defull dede.  
 And as he stode yn redyng,  
 He fell downe yn swounyng,  
     For sorow his hert gan blede ;

\* Original reading : *drynke*.

† Original reading : *kygh*.

Ther was nother olde ny yynge, 610  
 That myghte forbere of wepynge,  
 For that worthy unther wede.

The lady herde gret dele yn halle,  
 On the steward gan she calle,  
 And sayde, What may this be  
 Yyf any thyng be amys,  
 Tell me what that hit ys,  
 And lette not for me.  
 Then sayde the steward verament,  
 Lo her a letter my lorde hath sente, 620  
 And therfore woos ys me :  
 She toke the letter and bygan to rede,  
 Then fonde she wryten all the dede  
 How she moste ynto the see.

Be styлле, syr, sayde the qwene,  
 Lette syche morynge bene,  
 For me have thou no kare ;  
 Loke thou be not shente,  
 But do my lordes commaundement,  
 God forbede thou spare ; 630  
 For he weddede so porely,  
 On me a sympull lady,  
 He ys ashamed sore ;  
 Grete well my lord fro me,  
 So gentyll of blode \* yn Crystyante,  
 Gete he never more.

Then was ther sorow and myche woo,  
 When the lady to shype shulde go,  
 They wepte and wronge her honde ; †  
 The lady that was meke and mylde, 640  
 In her arme she bar her chylde  
 And toke leve of the londe.  
 When she wente ynto the see,  
 In that robe of ryche ble,  
 Men sowened on the sonde ;  
 Sore they wepte, and sayde, Alas !  
 Certes this ys a wykked kase,  
 Wo worth dedes wronge !

\* Original reading : *bloude*.

† Original reading : *hond*.

The lady and the lytyll chylde,\*  
 Fleted forth on the water wylde, 650  
 With full harde happes;  
 Her surkote that was large and wyde,  
 Therwith her vysage she gan hyde,  
 With the hynther lappes.  
 She was aferde of the see,  
 And layde her gruf upon a tre,  
 The chylde to her pappes;  
 The waves that were grete and strong,  
 On the bote faste they thronge,†  
 With mony unsemely rappes. 660

And when the chyld gan to wepe,  
 With sory hert she songe hit aslepe,  
 And put the pappe yn his mowth,  
 And sayde, Myghth y ones gete lond,  
 Of the water that ys so stronge,  
 By northe or by sowthe!  
 Wele owth y to warye the see,  
 I have myche shame yn the,  
 And ever she lay and growht;  
 Then she made her prayer, 670  
 To Jhesu and his moder dere,  
 In all that she kowthe.

Now this lady dwelled thore  
 A full sevene nyght and more,  
 As hit was goddys wylle;  
 With karefull herte and sykyng sorc,  
 Such sorow was her yarked yorc,  
 And she lay full stylle.  
 She was dryven toward Rome,  
 Thorow the grace of god yn trone, 680  
 That all thyng may fulfyllc:  
 On the see she was so harde bestadde  
 For hunger and thurste allmoste madde,  
 Wo worth chawnses ylle!

\* This is the second time our heroine has been exposed at sea, in an open boat, and the first, with her little child.

† Original reading: *thonge*.



A marchaunte dwelled yn that cytè,  
 A ryche mon of gold and fee,  
     Jurdan was hys name ;  
 Eevery day wolde he,  
 Go to playe hym by the see,  
     The eyer for to tane. 690  
 He wente forth yn that tyde,  
 Walkyng by the see sythe,  
     Alle hym selfe alone :  
 A bote he fonde by the brymme,  
 And a fayr lady therynne,  
     That was ryght wo-bygone.

The cloth on her shon so bryth  
 He was aferde of that syght,  
     For glysteryng of that wede ;  
 And yn his herte he thowghth ryght, 700  
 That she was non erdyly wyght ;  
     He sawe never non shuch yn leede.  
 He sayde, What hette ye, fayr ladye ?  
 Lord, she sayde, y hette Egarye,  
     That lye here yn drede :  
 Up he toke that fayre ladye,  
 And the yonge chylde her by,  
     And hom he gan hem lede.

When he come to his byggyng,  
 He welcomed fayr that lady yynge, 710  
     That was fayr and bryght ;  
 And badde his wyf yn all thyng,  
 Mete and drynke for to bryng  
     To the lady ryght.  
 What that she wyll crave,  
 And her mowth wyll hit have,  
     Loke hit be redy dyght :  
 She hath so longe meteles be,  
 That me thynketh great pytè,  
     Conforte her yf thou myght. 720

Now the lady dwelles ther,  
 With alle mete that gode were  
     She hedde at her wylle :

She was curteys yn all thyng,  
Bothe to olde and to yynge,

Her loved bothe gode and ylle.  
The chylde bygan for to thryfe,  
He wax the fayrest chyld on lyfe

Whyte as flour on hylle;  
And she sewed\* sylke werk yn bour,  
And tawghte her sone nortowre,  
But evyr she mornede styлле.

730

When the chylde was seven yer olde,  
He was bothe wyse and bolde,

And wele made of flesh and bone;  
He was worthy unther wede,  
And ryght well kowthe prike a stede,  
So curtays a chylde was none.

All men lovede Segramowre,  
Bothe yn halle and yn bowre,

740

Whersoever he gan gone.  
Leve we at the lady clere of vyce,  
And speke of the kyng of Galys,  
Fro the sege when he come home.

Now the sege broken ys,  
The kyng come home to Galys,  
With mykyll myrthe and pride;  
Dukes and erles of ryche asyce,  
Barones and knyghtes of mykyll pryse,  
Come rydynge be hys syde.

750

Syr Kodore his steward thanne,  
Aycyn hym rode with mony a man,  
As faste as he myght ryde;  
He tolde the kyng aventowres,  
Of his halles and his bowres,  
And of his londys wyde.

The kyng sayde, By goddys name,  
Syr Kadore, thou art to blame

For thy fyrst tellynge;  
Thou sholdest fyrst have tolde me  
Of my lady Egare,  
I love most of all thyng,

760

\* Original reading : *shewed*.

Then was the stewardes herte wo,  
 And sayde, Lorde, why sayst thou so?  
 Art not thou a trewe kyng?  
 Lo her the letter ye sente me,  
 Yowr owene self the sothe may se,  
 I have don your byddynge.

The kyng toke the letter to rede,  
 And when he sawe that ylke dede, 770  
 He wax all pale and wanne;  
 Sore he grette and sayde, Alas!  
 That ever born y was,  
 Or ever was made manne!  
 Syr Kadore, so mot y the,  
 Thys letter come never fro me,  
 I tell the her anone.  
 Bothe they wepte and yaf hem ylle;  
 Alas! he sayde, saf goddys wylle,  
 And both they \* sowened than. 780

Grete lordes stode by,  
 And toke up the kyng hastyly,  
 Of hem was grete pytè;  
 And when they both kevered were,  
 The kyng toke hym the letter ther,  
 Of the heddys thre.  
 A lord, he sayde, be goddes grace,  
 I sawe never this letter in place,  
 Alas! how may this be?  
 After the messenger ther they sente, 790  
 The kyng askede what way he wente;  
 "Lord,† be your moder fre."

Alas! then sayde the kyng,  
 Whether my moder was so unhende,  
 To make thys treson;  
 By my krowne she shall be brent,  
 Withowten any other jugement,  
 That thenketh me best reson.  
 Grete lordes toke hem betwene,  
 That they wolde exyle the qwene, 800  
 And berefe her hyr renowne;

\* Original reading: *the*.† Original reading: *Ler*.

Thus they exiled the false qwene,  
 And byrafte her hyr lyflothe clene,  
 Castell, towre, and towne.

When she was fled over the see fome,  
 The nobull kyng dwelled at hom,  
 With full hevy chere ;

With karcfull hert and drury mone,  
 Sykynges made he many on,

For Egarye the clere :

810

And when he sawe chylderen play,  
 He wepte and sayde, Well away !

For my sone so dere.

Such lyf he lyved mony a day,

That no mon hym stynte may,

Fully seven yere.

Tyll a thowght yn hys herte come,  
 How his lady, whyte as fome,

Was drowned for his sake :

"Thorow the grace of gode yn trone,

820

I woll to the pope of Rome,

My penans for to take."

He lette ordeyne shypus fele,

And fylled hem full of wordes wele,

Hys men mery with to make ;

Dolys he lette dyghth and dele,

For to wynnen hym sowles hele,

To the shyp he toke the gate.

Shypmen, that wer so mykyll of price,

Dyght her takull on ryche acyse,

830

That was fayr and fre ;

They drowgh up sayl, and leyd out ore,

The wynde stode as her lust wore

The wether was lythe on le.

They sayled over the salt fome,

Thorow the grace of god in trone,

That moste ys of powstè ;

To the cyté when they come,

At the burgeys hous his yn he nome,

Ther as woned Emarye.

840

Emare called her sone,  
 Hastely to here come,  
     Wythoute ony lettyng ;  
 And sayde, My dere sone so fre,  
 Do a lytull aftur me,  
     And thou shalt have my blessyng.  
 To-morowe thou shall serve yn halle,  
 In a kurtyll of ryche palle,  
     Byfore this nobull kyng :  
 Loke sone so curteys thou be, 850  
 That no mon fynde chalange to the,  
     In no manere thyng.

When the kyng ys served of spycerye,  
 Knele thou downe hastyllye,  
     And take his hond yn thyn ;  
 And when thou hast so done,  
 Take the kuppe of golde sone,  
     And serve hym of the wyne :  
 And what that he speketh to the,  
 Cum anon and tell me, 860  
     On goddes blessyng and myne.  
 The chylde wente ynto the hall,  
 Amonge the lordes grete and small,  
     That lufsume were unther lyne.

Then the lordes that wer grete,  
 Wysh and wente to her mete,  
     Menstrelles\* browght yn the kowrs.  
 The chylde hem served so curteysly,  
 All hym loved that hym sy,  
     And spake hym gret honowres. 870  
 Then sayde all that lokyd hym upon,  
 So curteys a chylde sawe they never non,  
     In halle ny yn bowres.  
 The kyng sayde to hym yn game,  
 Swete sone, what ys thy name ?  
     Lord, he seyde, y hyghth Segramowres.

Then that nobull kyng  
 Toke up a grete sykyng,  
     For hys sone hyght so,

---

\* Original reading : *Mentrelles*.

Certys, withowten lesynge, 880  
 The teres out of his yēn gan wryng,  
 In herte he was full woo.  
 Neverthelese he lette be,  
 And loked on the chylde so fre,  
 And mykell he lovede hym thoo.  
 The kyng sayde to the burgeys anone,  
 Swete syr, ys this thy sone?  
 The burgeys sayde, Yoo.

Then the lordes, that were grete,  
 Whesshen ayeyn aftyr mete, 890  
 And then com spycerye,  
 The chylde, that was of chere swete,  
 On his kne downe he sete,  
 And served hym curteyslye.  
 The kynge called the burgeys hym tyll  
 And sayde, Syr, yf hit be thy wyll,  
 Yyf me this lytyll body ;  
 I shall hym make lorde of town and towr,  
 Of hie halles and of bowre.  
 I love hym specyally. 900

When he had served the kyng at wylle,  
 Fayr he wente his modyr tyll,  
 And tellys her how hyt ys.  
 "Soone when he shall to chambur wende,  
 Take his hond at the grete ende,  
 For he ys thy fadur, y wysse,  
 And byd hym come speke with Emaré,  
 That changed her name to Egare,  
 In the lond of Galys."  
 The chylde wente ayeyn to halle, 910  
 Amonge the grete lordes alle,  
 And served on ryche asyse.

When they wer well at ese afyne,  
 Bothe of brede, ale, and wyne,  
 They rose up more and myn ;  
 When the kyng shulde to chambur wende,  
 He toke his hond at the grete ende,  
 And fayre he helpe hym yn ;

And sayde, Syr, if your wyll be,  
 Take me your honde, and go with me, 920  
     For y am of yowr kynne.  
 Ye shull come speke with Emare,  
 That changed her nome to Egare,  
     That berys the whyte chynne.

The kyng yn herte was full woo,  
 When he herd mynge tho  
     Of her that was his qwene ;  
 And sayde, Sone, why sayest thou so ?  
 Wherto umbraydest thou me of my wo ?  
     That may never bene. 930  
 Nevertheles with hym he wente,  
 Ayeyn hem come the lady gent,  
     In the robe bryght and shene,  
 He toke her yn his armes two,  
 For joy they sowened both to,  
     Such love was hem bytwene.

A joyfull metyng was ther thore,  
 Of that lady goodly unther-gore,  
     Frely in armes to folde ;  
 Lorde ! gladde was syr Kadore, 940  
 And other lordes that ther wore,  
     Semely to beholde.  
 Of the lady that \* was put yn the see,  
 Thorow grace of god in trinite,  
     Thar wes kevered of cares colde.  
 Leve we at the lady whyte as flour,  
 And speke we of her fadur the emperour,  
     That fyrste the tale of ytolde,

The emperour her fadyr then  
 Was † woxen an olde man, 950  
     And thougth on hys synne ;  
 Of hys thoughtyr Emare,  
 That was putte ynto the see,  
     That was so bryght of skynne.  
 He thougth that he wolde go,  
 For his penance to the pope tho,  
     And heven for to wyne ;

\* Original reading : *wat*.† Original reading : *Wax*.

Messengeres he sente forth sone,  
 And they come to the kowrt of Rome,  
 To take her lordes inne.

960

Emare prayde her lorde the kyng,  
 Syr, abyde that lordys komyng,  
 That ys so fayr and fre ;  
 And, swete syr, yn all thyng,  
 Aqweynte you with that lordyng,  
 Hit ys worshyp to the.

The kyng of Galys seyde than,  
 So grete a lord ys ther nan \*

In all crystyantè.

" Now, swete syr, whatever betyde,  
 Ayayn that grete lord ye ryde,  
 And all thy knyghtys with the."

970

Emare thawghte her sone yyng,  
 Aycyn the emperour komyng,

How that he sholde done :

Swete sone, yn all thyng,

Be redy with my lord the kyng,

And be my swete sone.

When the emperour kysseth thy fadyr so fre,

Loke yf he wyll kysse the,

Above the to hym sone ;

Add bydde hym come speke with Emare,

That was putte ynto the see,

Hymself yaf the dome.

980

Now kometh the emperour of pryse,

Aycyn hym rode the kyng of Galys,

With full mykull pryde ;

The chyld was worthy unther-wede,

And satte upon a nobyll stede,

By his fadyr syde :

And, when he mette the emperour,

He valed his hode with gret honour,

And kyssed hym yn that tyde ;

And other lordys of gret valowre,

They also kessed Segramowre ;

In herte ys not to hyde.

990



The emperours herte anamerred gretlye  
Of the chylde that rode hym by,

With so lovely chere.

Segramowre he sayde his stede,

1000

Hys owene fadyr toke good hede,

And other lordys that ther were.

The chylde spake to the emperour,

And sayde, Lord, for thyn honour,

My worde that thou wyll here ;

Ye shull come speke with Emare,

That changede her name to Egare.

That was thy thowghthur dere.

The emperour wax all pale,

And sayde, Sone, why umbraydest me of balc,

1010

And thou may se no bote ?

“Syr, and ye wyll go with me,

I shall the brynge with that lady fre,

That ys lovesom on to loke.”

Neverthelesse with hym he wente,

Ayeyn hym come that lady gent,

Walkyng on her fote ;

And the emperour alyghte tho.

And toke her yn his armes two,

And clypte and kyssed her fote.

1020

Ther was a joyfull metyng

Of the emperour and of the kynge,

And also of Emare ;

And so ther was of syr Segramour,\*

That aftyr was emperour,

A full gode man was he.

A grette feste ther was holde,

Of erles and barones bolde,

As testymonyeth thys story.

\* Original reading : *Egramour*.

Thys ys on of Brytayne layes,\*  
That was used by olde dayes,

1030

\* Many poems of high antiquity, composed by the Armorican bards, still remain and are frequently cited by Father Lobineau in his learned history of Basse-Bretagne. Chaucer, in his *Frankelynes prologue*, has the following lines:—

“Thise old gentil Bretons in hir dayes  
Of diverse aventures maden layes,  
Rimeyed in hir firste Breton tonge;  
Which layes with hir instruments they songe,  
Or elles reddeden hem for hir plesance,  
And on of hem have i in remembrance,—  
In *Armorike*, that called is *Bretaigne*, &c.”

See, too, what is said on this subject in the prologue to the romance of *Sir Orphewe*. Both authors allude to the Armorican Bretons.

Again, in *The Erle of Telous*:—

“A laye of Bretayne callyd hyt ys.”

The old English *Ballad of Sir Gowther* (Royal MSS. 17 B XLIII) is said by the writer to have been taken out of one of the *Lays of Britanye*: and, in another place, he says *The first Lay of Britanye*. In the old French romance of *Merlin*, that prophet comes into the presence of King Arthur at a great feast, in the form of a beautiful blind harper, and harps “*ung lai de Breton*.” (Fo. cix.) There is a curious and valuable collection of French lais, by *Marie de France*, most of which are asserted to have been made by the Bretons. See Warton’s *History of English Poetry*, Dissertation I. and Tyrwhitt’s *Introductory Discourse*, note on V. 10985. This set of old French tales of chivalry was written, as Warton pretends, by the bards of Bretagne. That it was the composition of Mary the poetess, is manifest:—

“*Oez seignurs ke dit Marie,  
Ki en son tens pas ne soblie:*”

whence it appears she was then dead; the editor persisting in praising her, though she were defamed by persons of great consequence. In the lais themselves she speaks of herself in the first person:—

“*Marie ai nun, si sui de France.*”

The *Varia Britannorum fabulæ*, in the library of the university of Upsala, which Mr. Tyrwhitt took to be a translation of these lais into one of the northern languages, seems rather to be a copy of the original French. A metrical version of *Lay le freine* is extant in the Edinburgh manuscript, but still imperfect. In the prologue to this collection we are told—

“*Les contes ke io sai venais  
Dunt li Bretun unt fait les lais.*”

This, or a similar expression, occurs repeatedly; and *Eliduc* is expressly called—

“*Un mut ancien lai Bretun.*”

The scene, also, is frequently laid in *Bretagne*, which, in one place, is expressly called *Bretaigne la menur*; and, in another, is ascertained by the mention of *Nantes*.\*

\* One of her lais, also, is intitled *I austie*, by mistake for *Eaustie*, or *E'austie*, which in Breton signifies a nightingale. See the dictionaries of Pelleuier and Rostrenen. Another is called *Bisclavart*, a corruption of *Bleiz-gary*, a loup-garou, or wer-wolf. See Rostrenen, voce *Garou*.

Men callys playn the garye.\*  
 Jhesu, that settes yn thy trone,  
 So graunte us with the to wone  
 In thy perpetuall glorye!

She must, however, mean *Great Britain*, in the lay of *Lanval*, where she mentions *Kardoel*, and that of *Yvenet*, where she speaks of *Caravent* (i.e. *Venta Silurum*, now Chepstow), which she places upon the *Dulas*, instead of the *Wye*. She, likewise, in others, mentions *Suht-Wales*, *Toteneis*, and *Excestre*. Another of her scenes is laid in *Normendie*. There are other lays of the same description, not attributed to Mary; as the *Lai de Gruelan* (*Fabliaux ou contes*, A. 125), which is likewise a *lai de Bretagne*. In the same book is the extract of another lay of Bretagne entitled, *Lai du Buisson d'épine*. In the old prose romance of *Merlin*, that magician introduces himself before King Arthur under the appearance of a handsome, young, and blind minstrel, "*Et il harpoit*," says the story, "*une lay de Breton, par telle façon que cestoit melodie de louyr*." (Vol. II. fo. 109.) The *Roman de Tristan*, an ancient manuscript already mentioned, has the following passage; part of Tristan's address to Ysolt:—

"Bons lais de harpe nus apris  
 Lais Bretuns de nostre pais."

This proves, what one might naturally enough have suspected, that the *Bretagne* or *Bretuns* spoken of in these lays are not the country and people of Armorica, but those of Great Britain; Tristan being a native of Liones, an imaginary district, which adjoined to Cornwall, and, as Carey pretends, was devoured by the sea.

Tristan himself was famous for his lays, some of which are preserved in his prose history; and, upon the death of his hero, says one of the manuscripts, "*li rois Artus en fist un lai, qui fu appelé le lai roial Et Lancelot en fit deus autres*." (20 D. II.) In the *Lai du buisson d'épine*, of which an extract is given by Le Grand, (*Fabliaux ou contes*, D. 103), the author says, of these lays, "They have been chanted in *Bretagne* and elsewhere. They preserve the originals at *Carlion*:" and, *Carlion*, or *Caerleon*, was one of Arthur's palaces in modern South Wales, as was also *Caerwent* already alluded to. So that it is far from being certain that, by the *Breton lays* of the French romances, are intended the productions of Armorica; and, much more probable, that they generally, by *Bretagne* and *Bretons*, mean the island and the inhabitants of Great Britain, rendered famous upon the continent by the fabulous history of Geoffrey of Monmouth. It does not, at the same time, appear that any such lays are preserved in Wales any more than in *Basse-Bretagne*, if, in fact, they ever existed in either country.

\* *Playing the garye* would seem, from this passage, to mean the public recitation of such a story as the present, accompanied by corresponding action, and the melody of the harp. We are told by Carew, that the "Guary-miracle in English, a miracle-playe, is a kinde of interlude compiled in Cornish, out of some scripture history, with that grosseness which accompanied the Romans' *vetus comedia*. "For representing it," he adds, "they raise an earthen amphitheatre, in some open field, having the diameter of its enclosed plain some 40 or 50 foot. The country people flock from all sides, many miles off, to heare and see it: for they have therein devils and devices, to delight as well the eye as the eare; the players conne not their parts without booke, but are prompted by one called the ordinary, who followeth at their back with the booke in his hand, and telleth them softly what they must pronounce aloud." (*Survey of Cornwall*, fo. 71, b.) Some of these *ordinalia*, or interludes, in the Cornish language, are extant in manuscript.



## APPENDIX.

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### HORN CHILDE AND MAIDEN RIMNILD.

---

Mi leve frende dere,  
Herken, and ye may here,  
    And ye wil under-stonde,  
Stories ye may lere  
Of our elders that were  
    Whilom in this lond.  
Y wil you telle of kinges tuo,  
Hende Hatheolf was on of tho,  
    That weld al Ingelond;  
Fram Humber north than walt he,  
That was into the wan see,  
    Into his owen hond.

10

He no hadde no childe, as ye may here,  
Bot a sone that was him dere,  
    When that he was born.  
The king was glad, and of gode chere,  
He fent after frendes fer and nere,  
    And bad men calle him Horn.  
Eight knave childer he sought  
To Horn his sone bitaught,  
    Alle were they frely born,

20

With him to play and lere to ride,  
Five yer in that ich tide,  
With baner him biforn.

Hende, and ye me herken wold,  
The childer name as it is told

Y wil you reken aright :  
Hathrof\* and Tebaude,  
Athelston and Winwold,  
Garüs, wise and wight, 30  
Wihard that was ever trewe,  
Seththen first him Horn knewe,  
To serve with al his might,  
Witard, and his brother Wikel,  
Sethen Horn fond hem ful fikel,  
Lesinges on him thai light.

Arlaund, that al thewes couthe,  
Bothe bi north and bi southe,  
In herd is nought to hide,  
On hunting was him most couthe 40  
For to blowe an horn with mouthe  
And houndes ledes biside ;  
To harpe wele, and play at ches,  
And al gamen that used is,  
And mo was in that tide ;  
Hathrolf Arlaund bitaught,  
Horn and his children aught,  
To lern hem to ride.

Out of Danmark coman here  
Opon Ingland for to were, 50  
With stout ost and unride,  
With yren hattes, scheld, and spere,  
Alle her pray to schip thai bere,  
In Clifland bi Tese-side.†  
Schepe and nete to schip thai brought,  
And al that thai have mought,  
In herd is nought to hide ;

\* Hayidf, MS. but in p. 13, &c. Hatherof.

† Now Cleveland, in the north-west corner of Yorkshire.

When Hatheolf it herd say,  
He busked bothe night and day,  
Oyain hem for to ride.

60

Within that ich fourtennight,  
Barouns fele, and mani a knight,  
Al were thai redi boun,  
With helme on heved, and brini bright,  
Alle were thai redi to fight,  
And rered gonfeynoun,  
On Alerton-more al they mett,  
Ther were her dayes sett,  
Failed hem no roum ;  
Seth then to Clifland thai rade,  
Ther the Danis men abade,  
To fel the feye adoun.

70

In a morning thai bigan,  
Of al that day thai no blan,  
That baleful werk to wirke,  
Sides thai made blo and wan,  
That er were white so fether on swan,  
Whiche gamen man aught irke.  
When that even bicam,  
The Danis men were al slan,  
It bigan to mirke.  
Whoso goth or rideth therbi,  
Yete may men see ther bones ly,  
Bi seynt Sibiles kirke.

80

Hende Hatheolf, as y you say,  
Duelled ther the nighen day,  
The folk of him was fain ;  
Thai toke anon that ich pray,  
Schepe and nete that ther slain lay,  
And yaf it the folk oyain ;  
Armour and brini bright,  
He yaf to squier and to knight,  
To servaunt and to swayn ;  
Schipes he dede to lond drawe,  
And yaf to bond men on rawe,  
For her catel was slayn.

90

Tho he seye that were wight,  
 With helme on heved, and brini bright,  
     And wele couthe prike a stede,  
 And tho that were doughti in fight, 100  
 Sexti dubbed he ther to knight,  
     And yaf hem riche mede.  
 Sum baylis he made,  
 And sum he yaf londes brade,  
     His yiftes were nought guede ;  
 And seth then he dede chirches make,  
 To sing for the dedes sake :  
     God quite him his mede !

Setthen king Hatholf fore,  
 For to hunten on Blakeowe-more,\* 110  
     With a rout unride,  
 In frethe and in forest thore,  
 To telle the dere strong it wore,  
     That he felled that tide,  
 Anon after, withouten lesing,  
 He held a feste at Pikering,  
     Ther his knightes schuld ride,  
 And seththen to York, was nought to layn,  
 Arlaunde com him oyain,  
     And Horn his sone with pride. 120

King Hatheolf tok the children aught,  
 That he had his sone bitaught,  
     And gan to wepe anon ;  
 Ich ave won mi fon with maught,  
 That we oycin in batayl faught,  
     And now thai ben al slon ;  
 And your faders ben slawe thare,  
 That of-thinketh me ful sare,  
     And other mani on.  
 The lond that thai held of me 130  
 Alle i give you here fre,  
     Ward no kepe y non.

---

\* Blackmore, in the wapentake of Rydale, in the north-riding of Yorkshire, whence Helmsley obtains the addition of *Blackmore*.

With Horn mi son y wil ye be  
 As your faders han ben with me,  
     And othes ye schul him swere,  
 That ye schal never fram him fle,  
 For gold no silver, lond no se,  
     Oycin outlondis here ; 140  
 To Horn his sone he hem bitoke,  
 And dede hem swere opon the boke.  
     Feuté thai schuld him bere ;  
 While that thai live might,  
 With helme on heved, and brini bright,  
     His londes for to were.

Hende Hatheolf, that was so fre,  
 Bot nighen moneth sojourned he,  
     No lenge no hadde he pes ;  
 Out of Yrlond com kinges thre, 150  
 Her names can y telle the  
     Wele, withouten les.  
 Fer wele and Winwald wern therto,  
 Malk an king was on of tho,  
     Proude in ich a pres,  
 At Westmer land stroyed thay,  
 The word come on a Whisson day  
     To king Hatheolf at his des.

He bad the harpour leven his lay,  
 For ons bihoveth another play, 160  
     Buske armour and stede,  
 He sent his sond night and day  
 Al so fast as he may  
     His folk to batayl bede.  
 " Bid hem that thai com to me  
 Al that hold her lond fre,  
     Help now at this nede.  
 Better manly to be slayn  
 Than long to live in sorwe and pain  
     Oyain our londis thede." 170

Thai busked hem wel hastily  
 To com to the kinges cri  
     With elleven night,



That everiche strete and everi sty  
 Glised ther thai riden by  
 Of her brinis bright ;  
 And seththen to Staynes-more thai rode,\*  
 The rout was bothe long and brod,  
 To fel tho fay in fight ;  
 Alle that night duelled thay  
 Til a morwe that it was day,  
 The barouns of gret might.

180

The Irise oft was long and brade,  
 On Staines-more ther thai rade,  
 Thai yaf a crie for pride.  
 Hende Hatheolf hem abade,  
 Swiche meting was never made,  
 With sorwe on ich aside.  
 Right in a litel stounde  
 Sexti thousand wer layd to grounde,  
 In herd is nought to hide,  
 King Hatheolf flough with his hond,  
 That was comen out of Yrlond,  
 Tuo kinges that tide.

190

King Hatheolf was wel wo,  
 For the Irise oft was mani and mo,  
 With scheld and with spere.  
 Ful long seththen man seyde so,  
 When men schuld to batayl go,  
 To men might on dere,  
 Thei king Hatheolf faught fast  
 King Malkan stiked attélast  
 His stede that schuld him bere.  
 Now schal men finde kinges fewe  
 That in batail be so trewe  
 His lond for to were.

200

When king Hatheolf on fot stode  
 The Yrise folk about him yode,  
 As hondes do to bare,

\* Between Brough and Bowes.

Whom he hit upon the hode, 210  
 Were he never knight so gode  
     He yave a dint wel sare.  
 He brought, in a litel stounde,  
 Wele fif thousande to grounde,  
     With his grimly gare ;  
 The Yrise oft tok hem to red  
 To ston that douhti knight to ded,  
     Thai durst neighe him na mare.

Gret diol it was to se  
 Of hende Hatheolf that was so fre, 220  
     Stones to him thai cast ;  
 Thai brak him bothe legge and kne,  
 Gret diol it was to se.  
     He kneled attélast.  
 King Malkan with wretthe out stert,  
 And smote king Hatheolf to the hert,  
     He held his wepen so fast,  
 That king Malkan smot his arm atuo,  
 Er he might gete his swerd him fro,  
     For nede his hert to-brast. 230

Tho king Malkan wan the priis,  
 Oway brought he no mo y wis  
     Of his men bot threttèn,  
 That wounded were in bak and side,  
 Thai fleghie, and durst nought abide,  
     Dathet who hem bimene.  
 To Yrlond he com oyain,  
 And left her fair folk al slain,  
     Licand on the grene.  
 Tharf hem noither night no day, 240  
 Make her ros thai wan the pray,  
     Bot slowe the king y wene.

An erl of Northumberland,  
 He herd telle this titheand,  
     He busked him to ride ;  
 Alle he sesed in his hand  
 Al that he to-forn him fand,  
     Right to Humber-side.

When that Arlaund herd sain  
That hende Hatheolf was slain 250  
    He durst no lenge abide,  
Thai busked bothe night and day,  
As falst as thai may,  
    Her hevedes for to hide.

Fer southe in Ingland,  
Houlac king ther thai fond,  
    With knightes stithe on stede,  
He toke him Horn bi the hand,  
When he hadde teld his titheand  
    Mennes hertes might blede : 260  
“When hende Hatheolf was slan  
And his londes from him tan,  
    And we ben flowe for drede,  
Of miself is me nought,  
But Horn his sone ichave the brought,  
    Help now in this nede.”

Houlac king was wel hende,  
Ressaived hem nighen Herlaund the tende,  
    Her maister for to be :  
“Mete and drink y schal hem fende, 270  
And ever when ich out wende  
    Thai schal wende with me.  
Horn schal be me leve and dere.”  
He bad Harlaund schuld him lere,  
    The right for to se,  
The lawes bothe eld and newe,  
All maner gamen end glewe,  
    In bok thus rede we.

Thus in boke as we rede  
Alle thai were in court to fede 280  
    Sweteliche at lare,  
Alle were thai clothed in o wede,  
To ride on palfray, other on stede,  
    Whether hem lever ware.  
Horn was bothe war and wise,  
At hunting oft he wan the priis,  
    Loved he nothing mare ;

Harpe and romaunce he radde aright,  
 Of al gle he hadde in sight  
 That in lond ware.

290

The word of Horn wide sprong  
 Hold he was bothe michel and long,  
 Within fiftene yere ;  
 Ther was no knight in Ingland  
 That might a dint stond of his hond,  
 Noither fer no nere.  
 Michel he was, and wele ymaked ;  
 As white as milke he was naked,  
 And ever o blithe chere ;  
 Meke he was, and trewe so stiel  
 Alle games he couthe wel,  
 As ye may forward here.

300

Houlac king, y wene,  
 Hadde no child bi the quene,  
 Bot a maid bright,  
 Al thai seyde that hir sene  
 Sche was a feir may, and a schene,  
 And maiden Rimneld she hight.  
 When sche herd Horn speke  
 Might sche him nought foryete,  
 Bi day no bi night,  
 Loved never childer mare  
 Bot Tristrem or Ysoud it ware,  
 Who so rede aright.

310

That miri maiden wald nought wond  
 Dern love for to fond,  
 Yif sche it might winne ;  
 Forthi sche sent with hir sond  
 For the speke with Arlond,  
 For Horn schuld cum with him.  
 And Arlaund him bithought,  
 Yif he Horn with him brought,  
 Lesinges schuld biginne ;  
 Forthi he lete Horn at hame,  
 And toke Hatherof in his name,  
 To maiden Rimneld [in].

320

The miri maiden, al so sone  
 As Hatherof into chamber come,  
     Sche wend that it wer Horn,  
 A riche cheir was undon  
 That seiven might sit theron, 330  
     In swiche craft ycorn ;  
 A baudekin theron was spred,  
 Thider the maiden hadde hem led,  
     To siten hir biforn,  
 Frount and spices she hem bede,  
 Wine to drink, wite and rede,  
     Bothe of coppe and horn.

Than a serjaunt sche bad ga,  
 A gentil goshawk for to ta,  
     Fair he was to flight, 340  
 Therwith herten \* gloves to,  
 Swiche was the maner tho,  
     And yaf Hatherof of his yift.  
 Sche wende bi Hatherof Horn it wore  
 That loved hunting nothing more,  
     On him hir love was light,  
 A les of grehoundes forth thai brought  
 And he forsoke, and wald it nought,  
     And seyde Hatherof he hight.

" What ever thi name it be, 350  
 Thou schalt have this houndes thre,  
     That wele can take a dere ;  
 And, Hatherof, for the love of me,  
 Com to-morn, and Horn with the : "  
     He lay her hert ful nere :  
 And Harlaund, that was hende,  
 Toke his leve for to wende,  
     With a blithe chere,  
 And com anon on the morn,  
 And brought with him hende Horn, 360  
     As ye may forward here.

\* Buckskin.

The maiden bour was fair spred,  
 Atired al with riche wedde,  
     Sche haylett them with winne ;  
 The mirie maiden hir bithought  
 In what maner that sche mought  
     Trewelove for to ginne.  
 Sche sett hir hem bituene,  
 The maiden was bright and schene,  
     And comen of kinges kinne ;  
 Anon hir selve hadde hem lede  
 To sitten opon her owen bedde,  
     Arlaund, and Horn with him.

370

Hendeliche sche to him spac,  
 A poumgarnet ther sche brak,  
     And spices dede sche calle ;  
 Wine to drink, after that  
 Sche lete fet forth a stede blac,  
     Was covered al with palle.  
 The stiropes were of silke wite,  
 Bridel and sadel al was slike,  
     And seyde, Horn, hende in halle,  
 It was me told thou schult be knight,  
     Y the yif here a stede light  
 And a queyntise of palle.

380

Horn, sche seyde, is thi name,  
 An horn i schal yive the ane,  
     A michel and unride,  
 Al yvore is the bon,  
 Sett with mani a riche ston,  
     To bere bi thi side.  
 The baudrike was of silk right,  
 The maiden self it hadde ydight,  
     Layd wyth gold for pride :  
 "What that ever be with me,  
 Horn, at thi wille schal it be,  
     In herd is nought te hide."

390

Than sche lete forth bring  
 A swerd hongand bi a ring,  
     To Horn sche it bitaught :

400

“It is the make of Miming,\*  
 Of all swerdes it is king,  
 And Weland it wrought.†  
 Bitterfer the swerd hight,  
 Better swerd bar never knight,  
 Horn, to the ich it thought ;  
 Is nought a knight in Ingland  
 Schal sitten a dint of thine hond,  
 Forsake thou it nought.”

Hendelich than thanked he 410  
 The maiden of hir yift fre,  
 And seyde, So god me spede,  
 Rimnild, for the love of the,  
 Y schal juste that thou schalt se  
 Opon this ich stede.

Horn, in that ich stounde,  
 Yaf the maiden love wounde,  
 So neighe hir hert it yede,  
 And sche wel trewely hath him hight,  
 Yif that he be dubbed knight, 420  
 Hir maidenhod to mede.

Within that ich fourtenight,  
 Horn was dubbed to knight,  
 And Hatherof, as i wene,  
 And other mani that were light,  
 Has Houlak king hadde hem hight,  
 So were thai ful fiftene.  
 A turnament the king lete crie,  
 Thider com wel on heye  
 Knightes that wer kene. 430  
 Maiden Rimneld biheld the play,  
 Hou Horn wan the priis that day,  
 To wite and nought to wene.

Houlac king yaf Horn leve  
 In his bour for to acheve  
 The maidens that were fre,

\* *Meming* was a satyr, or silvan deity, in the forests of Lapland, who possessed a sword and bracelet of inestimable value, which *Hoder*, brother of *Adils* king of Sweden, in vain endeavoured to wrest from him. See *Saxo*, V. 3, P. 40, where he is called *Mimring*. It is, at the same time, *Mimming* in *Olaus Magnus*, L. 3, C. 12.

† An allusion to the legend of Weyland Smith.

Riche of kin and hondes sleye,  
 Thai haddre frendes fer and neighe,  
     He might avaunced be,  
 And maiden Rimmild him bede  
 That he schuld take non other rede  
     No nother than chose he,  
 For sche wel trewely hath him hight,  
 Yif that sche live might,  
     His leman wald sche be.

+40

Tebaud went biyond se,  
 And Winwald, that was so fre,  
     To leren hem to ride ;  
 With the king of France duelled he,  
 Mani time thai gat the gre\*  
     In turnament that tide.  
 The king seighe that thai war wight,  
 Bothe he dubbed hem to knight,  
     With wel riche pride ;  
 Wiif thai toke, and duelled thare,  
 In Ingland com thai no mare,  
     Her werdes for to bide.

+450

Gariis into Bretein went,  
 And Athelston with him was lent,  
     To an erl so fre ;  
 At justes, and at turnament,  
 Whiderward so thai went,  
     Ever thai gat the gre ;  
 Anc th' erl hem bothe knightes made,  
 And yaf hem londes wide and brade  
     With him for to be :  
 Thus thai duelled ther in pes,  
 While that Cristes wil wes ;  
     In boke so rede we.

+460

Houlac king yaf gold and fe  
 To hem, that thai might the better be,  
     And bad thai schuld wive ;

+470

---

\* The degree, or prize.



Hatherof, a knight fre,  
And, Horn, he seyde, i love the,  
    Man most olive :  
And wiard, treuly, he hath hight,  
That he schal dubbed be to knight,  
    At another sithe ;  
Wigard and Wikel hem bithought  
How thai Horn bitray mought, 480  
    God lete hem never thrive !

On a day, as Houlak king  
Schuld wende on his playing,  
    To late his haukes flewe,  
Horn than, withouten lesing,  
Bilaft at hom for blode-leteing,  
    Al for a maladye.  
Wikard by the king rade,  
Wikel that lesing made,  
    Horn gan thai wray, 490  
And seyde, Sir, y seighe yisterday  
Hou Horn by thi douhter lay,  
    Traitors bothe be thai.

The king leved that thai sede,  
Forthi yaf sche him the stede,  
    Lesing it is nought ;  
He went hom as he wern wode  
Into boure anon he yode,  
    And maiden Rinnild he fought.  
He bete hir so that sche gan blede, 500  
The maidens sleighe oway for drede,  
    Thai durst help hir nought ;  
Giltles sche was of that dede,  
Horn hadde nought hir maidenhede,  
    Bot in word and thought.

Houlac his swerd hath tan,  
And seyde Horn schuld be slan,  
    For wretche he wald wede ;  
“ He hath me don michel schame,  
Y wende wele have suffred nane 510  
    For mi gode dede.”

Knichtes com the king biforn,  
 Alle prayd thai for Horn,  
     No might ther non spede ;  
 The king into his chaunbur is gon,  
 And schet himself therin alon,  
     Til his wretthe overyede.

Thei that Horn was sore adrad,  
 Into boure he was ladde,  
     The maiden for to se, 520  
 He fond hir liggeand on hir bedde,  
 Mouthe and nose al for-bled ;  
     " This hastow for me."  
 " Bi god of heven that me bought,  
 Of mi selve is me nought,  
     Way is me for the.  
 Fals men hath on ous leyd,  
 And to mi fader ous biwraid,  
     Y drede he flemes the.

Bot, Horn, yif it so schal bitide 530  
 That thou schalt out of lond ride,  
     And flemed schaltow be,  
 This seven winter y schal abide,  
 Mi maidenhed to hele and hide,  
     For the love of the ;  
 Thei an emperour com :  
 King, other kinges sone,  
     For to wedde me,  
 Of no love ne schal he spede,  
 That y ne schal kepe mi maidenhede, 540  
     So help me god to the.

Horn, to morwe in the morning  
 Thou schalt fare on hunting,  
     To take the wild ro,  
 Yif god the spede an hunting,  
 Loke thou bring it bifor the king,  
     What so thou may do,  
 As he sittes at his des,  
 Yserved of the first mes,  
     Haughtel the now so, 550

Fare as thou wist nought,  
And he schal telle the al his thought,  
Er thou fram that bord go."

A morwen Horn to hunting is gan,  
To take the wilde with the tam,  
In the morwening ;  
Fine hertes hath he tan,  
Bi midday brought hem ham,  
Bifor Houlak king.  
'The king seyde, It is for nought, 560  
Traitor, thou hast tresoun wrought,  
To-morwe yf y the finde,  
Bi mi croun thou schalt be slawe,  
With wilde hors al to-drawe,  
And sethen on galwes hing.

To Rimneld he com withouten lesing,  
And sche bitaught him a ring  
The vertu wele sche knewe :  
" Loke thou forsake it for no thing,  
It schal ben our tokening, 570  
The ston it is wel trewe.  
When the ston wexeth wan,  
Than chaungeth the thought of thi leman,  
Take then a newe ;  
When the ston wexeth rede,  
'Than have y lorn mi maidenhede,  
Oyaines the untrew.

Horn seyde, In thine erber is a tre,  
Ther under is a wel fre,  
Ygrowen al with yve, 580  
Rimnild, for the love of me,  
Everi day that thou ther be,  
To se the water lithe,  
And, when thou sest mi schadu thare,  
Than trowe thou me na mare,  
Than am y bon to wive,  
And, while thou sest mi schadu nought,  
Than chaungeth never mi thought,  
For no woman olive.

Houlac king wald nere wede, 590  
There he sat opon his sede,  
And seyð, Traitour, fle!  
Horn tok his leve, and yede,  
With him he toke his gode stede,  
And grehoundes bot three;  
And alle his harneys, lasse and mare,  
Hatherof durst nought with him fare,  
So wroth the king was he.  
Maidens in the boure can crie,  
And seyð Rimmild wald dye, 600  
“Now swoneth that fre.”

When Horn com fer out of that fight,  
He seyde, Godebounde he hight,  
When he gan ani mete;  
Wiard rode after, day and night,  
Al so fast as he might,  
Horn for to seke.  
Of Godebounde herd he speke,  
Horn no might he never gete,  
Bi way, no bi strete. 610  
Wiard rode southe, and Horn rode west,  
To Wales Horn come attélest,  
Wel long er thai so mete.

Thurth a forest as he schuld fare  
An armed knight mett he thare,  
And bad Horn schuld abide,  
To yeld his harnaise lesse and mare,  
Other juste, whether him lever ware,  
The lawe is nought to hide;  
And Horn of justing was ful fain, 620  
And seyð to the knight oyain,  
Ful leve me were to ride.  
The knight toke a schaft in hand  
And Horn wele under fand  
That he couthe ride.

Horn tok on al so long  
A ful tough and to so strong,  
Oyaines him that tide;

The knightes scheld he cleve atuo,  
And of his plates he brac tho, 630  
And frussed alle his side.  
Out of his sadel he bar him than,  
He brac his arm, and his schulder ban,  
He hadde a ful unride.\*

When he of swoning bicam  
He asked after Hornes nam,  
Whider he wald gang :  
“ In Walis lond is ther nan  
Man ymade of flesche no ban,  
Oyain the may stand.” 640  
Horn answered anon,  
“ Godebounde is mi nam,  
I cham comen to fand.  
For to win gold and fe,  
In servise with your king to be,  
That lord is of this land.”

“ Our kinges name is Elidan,  
In al Wales is ther nan  
So strong a man as he ;  
While the seven days began 650  
Everich day with sundri man  
Justing bedes he the.  
The eighteen day, be thou bold,  
Yif thou the seven days mai hold,  
The king than schaltow se  
Com rideand on a stede broun,  
With a soket o feloun,  
For to win the gre.”

Horn seyde, withouten lesing,  
For to speke with the king, 660  
For nothing wil y bide.  
The knight teld him na mare  
The king at Snowedoun he fond thare,  
Sir Elydan that tyde.

\* Either this or the preceding stanza is defective by the omission of three lines.

He justed al that seven night  
 Everi day with sundri knight,  
     He gat the fairest pride ;  
 The eighten day with Elidan,  
 And wan her stedes everilk an,  
     In herd is nought to hide.

670

He smot the king upon the scheld,  
 Of his hors he made him held,  
     And feld him to the grounde,  
 Swiche on hadde he founde seld,  
 That so hadde feld him in the feld,  
     Bi for that ich stounde.  
 The king asked him what he hight,  
 And he him answerd anon right,  
     My name is Godebounde.  
 "Y wil the yif gold and fe,  
 Yif that thou wil duelle with me,  
     Bi yere a thousand pounde."

680

Messangers com out of Yrland,  
 And toke the king a letter in hand,  
     And bad he schuld rede,  
 Fro a king, that men dede wrong,  
 His owen sone ich understond,  
     That axed help at nede.  
 He lete write a letter oyain,  
 He schuld han help is nought to layn,  
     With knightes stithe on stede.  
 Horn to batayl was ful boun,  
 And folwed the messangers out of toun,  
     Into Irlond thai him lede.

690

Hem com an haven wele to hand,  
 That Yolkil is cleped in Irland,  
     The court was ther beside.  
 Finlawe king ther thai fande,  
 For to here titheande  
     Oyain hem gan ride.  
 The letter told that he brought,  
 Help schuld him faile nought  
     Oyaines thilke tide.

700

King Finlak dede to Malkan say,  
Whether he wold bi night or day,  
The bataile wald he bide.

The kinges sones riden bathe,  
To hayles Horn when thai him sathe,  
And welcomed him, that fre,  
Anon thai gun to strive rathe, 710  
Whether of hem him schuld have  
To duelle in her meinè.  
Horn answerd hem than as hende,  
And seyde to hem, My leve frende,  
The king than wald y se,  
And afterward y wille you telle,  
Where me levest is to duelle,  
And semlyest to me.

The messenger told Hornes dede,  
Hou he hadde ywon the stede, 720  
And hou he seighe him ride ;  
Sir, mightestow hold him to thi nede,  
King Malkan tharf the nought drede,  
Batayle might thou bide.  
Hour king boden him gold and fe,  
With that he wil with him be,  
At this ich nede ;  
And Horn ful trewely hath him hight,  
For to stond in stede of knight,  
In herd is nought to hide. 730

In Yrlond was ther nan,  
That alle thai be to Malkan gan,  
So michel was his poustè,  
Bot Finlak king him alan,  
Has the batayl undertan,  
Yif Crist wil that it be,  
King Malkan dede bede out here  
Opon the king Finlak towere,  
Now than schal we se,  
Yif he wil fight he schal be slan, 740  
Yif he wil bide he schal be tau,  
Y trowe best he wil fle.

Bot thre wonkes were ther sett,  
 That alle this folk schall be mett  
     And batayle schal ther be ;  
 The Walis king hadde gret lett,  
 With windes and with waters bett,  
     Sir Elidan the fre.  
 He no might into Irlond come,  
 For to helpen his sone,  
     For stormes on the se,  
 King Finlak seyde, Is nought to hide,  
 This batayl dar y nought abide,  
     Mi rede is tan to fle :

750

And than was Horn as fain o fight,  
 As is the soule of the light  
     When it ginneth dawe :  
 " Sir king, for to held thi right,  
 Y rede thou bede riche yift,  
     The folk wil to the drawe.  
 Geder to the folk that thou may,  
 And baldliche hold thi day,  
     Batail schal we schawe,  
 To fle me think it is gret schame,  
 Ar dintes be smiten or ani man stan,  
     For drede of wordes awe."

760

The kinges sones wer knightes bold,  
 And seyde thai wald the batail hold,  
     Her lives for to lete.  
 Finlak king, thei he wer ald,  
 Bletheli he seyde fight he wald,  
     To hold that he bihete.  
 Thus thai riden out of toun,  
 With spere oloft and gomfaynoun,  
     Malkan king to mete,  
 With speres scharp, and swerdes gode,  
 Thai slough mani a frely fode,  
     So grimly gun thai grete.

770

Ther Horn seighe the mest thrang,  
 In he rides hem amang,  
     And lays on wel gode won ;

780



It was no man of Yrland  
Might stond a dint of his hand,  
At ich stroke he slough on.\*

Maiden and wiif gret sorwe gan make,  
For the kinges sones sake,

That were apoint to dye.  
Finlac king oyaines him come,  
And his armes of him nome,  
The blode ran over his eighe.  
He cleped his douhter Acula,  
And bad sche schuld a plaster ta,  
Of woundes was sche sleighe.

790

The maiden tast † Hornes wounde,  
The kinges douhter, in that stounde,  
Of him hyc is ful fain :

“Thou schalt be sone hole and founde,  
Hastow Malkan brought to grounde ?”

He seyd, Ya, oyain.  
King Malkan was mi faders ban,  
And now for sothe ich have him slan,  
The sothe for to sain.  
Mi fader swerd y wan to day,  
Y kepe it while y live may,  
The name is Blavain.

800

Thai birid the folk that wer slan,  
And her armour thai ladde ham,

With hors white and broun ;  
Finlac king him bithought,

Hou he Horn yeld mought,  
To yif him his warisoun ;

810

He tok Malkan kinges lond,  
And sesed it into Hornnes hond,

Bothe tour and toun.  
Erles, barouns, everichon,  
In Irland was ther non,

That ‘ he ’ no com to his somoun.

\* A leaf, at least, appears to be here wanting. It would seem that there had been a battle, in which Horn was wounded, and the king's sons were taken prisoners.

† Tasteëd, touch'd, or felt, a Gallicism.

The kinges douhter, Acula,  
Loved hende Horn sa,  
    Sche durst it nought kithe ; 820  
Whether sche seighe him ride or go,  
Hir thought hir hert brak atuo,  
    That sche no spac with that blithe.  
On a day sche made her seke,  
Horn com, and with hir speke,  
    Sche might no lenger mithe ;  
To him spac that maiden fre,  
And seyde, Horn, y love the,  
    Man most olive.

Over al Horn the priis him wan, 830  
He seyde it was for o wiman,  
    That was him leve and dere ;  
Acula wende for than  
That Horn hir loved, and most gode an  
    Of ani woman that were.  
Of another was al his thought,  
Maiden Rinnild foryat he nought,  
    Sche lay his hert ful nere ;  
The ring to schewen hath he tan,  
The hewe was chaunged of the stan, 840  
    Forgon is seven yere.

Horn wald no lenger abide,  
He busked him for to ride,  
    And gedred folk everi whare ;  
An hundred knightes by his side,  
With stedes fele, and michel pride,  
    Her schippes were ful yare.  
Thai sayled over the flode so gray,  
In Inglond arived were thay,  
    Ther hem levest ware ; 850  
Under a wode ther thai gan lende,  
Horn seighe a begger wende,  
    And after he is fare.

Horn fast after him gan ride,  
And bad the begger schuld abide,  
    For to here his speche ;

The begger answerd in that tide,  
Vilaine, canestow nought ride ?

Fairer thou might me grete.  
Haddestow cleped me gode man, 860  
Y wold have teld the wennes i cam,  
And whom y go to feche ;  
Horn to seke have i gon,  
Thurthout londes mani on,  
And ay schal while we mete :

And now be min robes riven,  
And me no was no nother yeven,  
Of alle this seven yere ;  
Y go to seke after him ay,  
And thus have done mani a day, 870  
Til that we mete yfere.  
To day is Moking the king  
With Rimnild at spouseing,  
The kinges douhter dere ;  
Many sides schuld be bibled  
Er he bring hir to his bed  
Yif Horn in lond were.

Wiard schaltow calle me,  
Gentil man, yif thou be fre,  
Tel me thi name. 880  
Thi knave wald y fain be  
That fair fest forto se,  
Me thenke thatow hast nane.  
Horn answerd him oyain,  
Ich hat Horn is nought to lain,  
And elles were me schame ;  
Bot, yif ich held that thou hast seyde,  
Er that thai ben in bed layd,  
Five thousande schal be slain.

Wiard, oyain schaltow ride 890  
To mi folk, and there abide,  
Have here mi robe to mende ;  
And y wil to court gon,  
Forto loke what thai don,  
In thi pover wede.

Bring hem under yon wode-side,  
 Al so yern astow may ride,  
     The way thou canst hem lede ;  
 And i schal heighe me wel sone,  
 Y com oyain er it be none, 900  
     Yif Crist me wil spede.

When Horn fro fer herd glewe,  
 With tabournes bete, and trumpes blewe,  
     Oyaines hem he yede ;  
 Mucing king ful wele he knewe,  
 He tok him bi the lorcin rewe,  
     Oyain he held his stede.  
 Wikard com, and smot him so,  
 And seyde, Traitour, lat the bridel go ;  
     The blode out after yede. 910  
 Horn ful trewely hath him hight,  
 He schal him yeld that ich night,  
     A box schal ben his mede.

Mojoun king was ful wo,  
 That he had smiten the pover man so,  
     And seyde, Lat mi bridel be.  
 Withthi thou lat mi bridel be,  
 What so thou wilt aski me,  
     Blethelich yeve i the.  
 ‘Porter,’ quath Horn, thatow wilt \* 920  
 Yive me maiden Rinnild,  
     That is so fair and fre.  
 The king was wroth, and rewe his yift,  
 “Thou askest wrong, and no thing right,  
     Sche may not thine be.”

Horn seyde, Y sett a nett o time,  
 Yif ani fische is taken therinne,  
     Of al this seven yere,  
 No schal it never more be mine,  
 Y wold it were sonken in helle-pine, 930  
     With fendes fele on fere.

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\* The MS. evidently reads *Peter*; for what reason cannot be conceived.

And yif it hath ytaken nought,  
Y schal it love in hert thought,  
    And be me leve and dere.  
Thus thai went alle y same  
Unto the castel, with gle and game,  
    A fole thai wende he were.

Of beggers mo than sexti,  
Horn seyde, Maister am y,  
    And aske the the mete, 940  
That y mote, and other thre,  
To-day in thine halle be,  
    When folk is gon to fete ;  
Than y wil folwe the ham,  
And that y mot with the gan,  
    In atté castel-yete.  
The king him hight sikerly,  
"Thou schalt in the halle by,  
    To have ther 'thi' mete."

Ther was mani riche gest 950  
Dight unto that frely fest  
    Of douhti folk in lond,  
Atté yate was strong thrast,  
Horn wald nought be the last,  
    In forto gange.  
The porter cald him herlot swain,  
And he put him oyain  
    Therout for to stand ;  
Horn brust upon him so  
His scholder bone he brak ato, 960  
    And in anon he thrange.

Kokes hadde the mete grayd,  
The bord was sett, the cloth was layd,  
    To benche yede the bold ;  
The trompes 'blewe,' the glewemen pleyd,  
The bischopes had the grace yseyd,  
    As muri men of mold.  
Ther was many a riche man,  
Mete and drink wel god wan  
    To alle that ete wolde ; 970

Horn sat, and litel etc,  
 Michel he thought, and more he speke,  
 For fole men schuld him hold.

Than was the lawe, sothe to say,  
 The bride schuld, the first day,  
 Serven atté mete ;

Hendelich than served scho,  
 As a maiden schuld do ;

Horn bigan do speke.  
 “Maiden, yif thi wille be  
 To godes men schultow se,  
 Thou no oughtest hem nought foryete,  
 And seththen the knightes schul turnay,  
 For to loke who so may  
 The maistri of hem yete.

980

Forth sche went, that maiden fre,  
 And feched drink that men might se

To that beggere :  
 “For Hornes love y pray the  
 Go nought ar this drunken be,  
 Yif ever he was the dere.”

990

The maiden by him stille stode,  
 To here of Horn hir thought it gode,  
 He lay hir hert ful nere ;  
 Of the coppe he drank the wine,  
 The ring of gold he kest therinne,  
 Bitokening lo it here.

“A sely man, the threstes fare,  
 Thou schalt have a drink mare,  
 Gode wine schal it be ;

1000

Another drink sche him bare ;  
 Sche asked yif Horn therin ware,  
 Ya, certes, than seyde he.

Nas sche bot a litel fram him gon,  
 That sche ne fel adoun anon,  
 Now swoneth that fre.

Knightes hir to chaumber ledde,  
 When sche lay upon hir bedde,  
 Sche seyde, Clepe Hatherof to me.

Knichtes, goth into halle swithe, 1010  
And bid the kinges make hem blithe,

That y wold wel fein ;  
Hatherof, go into the erber swithe,  
And geder parvink and ive,  
Greses that ben of main.

Certeynli, as y you say,  
Horn is in this halle to day,  
Y wende he hadde ben slain,  
Mojoun king schal never spede,  
For to have mi maidenhede, 1020  
Now Horn is comen oyain.

Hatherof, go into halle and se,  
In seli pover wede is he,

Y pray the knowe him right,  
Say him, Treuthe-plaint er we,  
Bid him, sche seyde, as he is fre,  
Hold that he bihiht.

Bidd him go, and me abide  
Right under yon wode-side,  
As he is a trewe knight ; 1030  
When al this folk is gon to play,  
He and y schal stele oway,  
Bituene the day and the night.

Hatherof into halle yode,  
For to bihald that frely fode,  
Fule wele he knewe his viis,  
Opon his fot hard he stode,  
Horn thought the tokening gode,

Up he gan to arise,  
Forth thai yede tho knightes bold, 1040  
Hatherof the maidens erand told,

Of trewe love Horn was wiis :  
“ Y schal com into the feld with pride,  
An hundred knightes bi mi side,  
Milke white is mi queintise.

Bot, Hatherof, thou most me schawe,  
Wharbi y schal Wikard knawe,  
His buffeyt schal be bought.”

"He hath queintise white so shawe,  
 With foules blac as ani crowe, 1050  
 With silke werk it is wrought.  
 Mojoun queintise 'is' yalu and wan,  
 Sett with pekok and with swan,  
 That he with him hath brought ;  
 Wikeles queintise is yalu and grene,  
 Floure de liis sett bituene,  
 Him foryete thou nought."

Now is Hatherof comen oyain,  
 And seyde he hath Horn sain,  
 And what folk he hath brought, 1060  
 And after 'wisarmes' he gan frain,  
 Was never Rimnild ere so fain,  
 In hert, no in thought.  
 "Hatherof, go into halle swithe,  
 And bid mi fader make him blithe,  
 And say icham sike nought.  
 Wikard that is leve to smite,  
 Horn schal him his dettes quite,  
 To night it schal be bought."

When thai hadde eten than were thai boun, 1070  
 With spere oloft and gonfainoun,  
 Al armed were tho bold ;  
 With trump and tabourun out of toun,  
 Thus thai redde the right roun,  
 Ich man as he wold.  
 An erle out of Cornwayle  
 Oyain Mojoun saun faile,  
 The turnament schal hold,  
 And Horn com into the feld with pride,  
 An hundred knightes bi his side, 1080  
 In rime as it is told.

Horn of coming was wel wise,  
 And knewe hem bi her queyntise,  
 Anon thai counterd tho.  
 Majoun the king hath tint the priis,  
 Under his hors fete he liis,  
 Horn wald noght slo.



To sir Wigard his swerd he weved,  
Even atuo he cleve his heved, 1090  
His box he yalt him tho.  
Out ha smot Wigles eighe,  
Traitors that er leve to lighe  
Men schal hem ken so.

That day Horn the turnament wan,  
Fro Mojoun and mani a man,  
With knightes stithe on stede,  
He toke the gre, that was a swan,  
And sent to Rimnild his leman,  
To hir riche mede. 1100  
To Houlac king Horn gan wende,  
And thonked him as his frende,  
Of his gode dede :  
“Thou feddest me, and forsterd to man :”  
He maked Wikel telle out than  
His lessinges, and his falshed.

Mojoun king is ivel dight,  
Tint he hath that swete wight,  
And wold ben oway,  
Horn, that hadde hir treuthe-plaint, 1110  
Wedded hir that ich night,  
And al opon a day.  
Now is Rimnild tuiis wedde,  
Horn brought hir to his bedde,  
Houlac king gan say,  
Half mi lond ichil the yive  
With mi doughter while y live,  
And al after mi day.

Five days sat her fest,  
With mete and drink riche and onest, 1120  
In boke as we rede ;  
Forth, as we telle in gest,  
Horn lete sende est and west,  
His folk to batayle bede ;  
Into Northhumberland for to fare,  
To winne that his fader ware,  
With knightes stithe on stede,

With erl, baroun, and with swain,  
To winne his fader lond oyain,  
Yif Crist him wold spede.

1130

Michel frely folk was thare,  
Into Northhumberland to fare,  
With stedes wite and broun ;  
Horn wald for no man spare  
To winne al that his fader ware,  
Bothe tour and toun.  
When Thorbrond herd this,  
That Horn to lond ycomen is,\*

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\* The rest is wanting.









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